

# Homer, *the slut*

Collaborations

B O B D Y L A N  
With TOM PETTY AND THE HEARTBREAKERS



夢の共演 真のアメリカン・スピリットを伝える必見ライブ

今世紀最大のアーティスト

photo by Neal Preston

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AN UDO ARTISTS PRESENTATION 1986

Special Subscriber Issue 2

# Second Subscriber Special Collaborations

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## Homer, the slut

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A few hours after the second Utrecht show with the legendary John Hume and the fabulous Meuleman brothers

Welcome to the second subscriber special and thanks for supporting *Homer, the slut*.



Why "collaborations"?  
You may be asking.

The answer lies in the number of letters I've received from Dylan fans who also happen to like Tom Petty or, more pressingly, The Grateful Dead.

Here, for example, is an extract from one received from Andrew Steed in February:

*"Q When did Dylan last play a "normal" tour of rock shows?*

*A 1986*

*Q When did Dylan begin exploring his back catalogue and subsequently his roots?*

*A 1987*

*Q What happened inbetween?*

*A He collaborated with The Grateful Dead.*

Bill Kreutzmann has been quoted as saying that Dylan doesn't know his own songs very well and I don't think it is a coincidence that in - and subsequent to - late 1987 Dylan started playing old songs in concert that had never been performed live before.

I have a Jerry Garcia acoustic tape from November '86 which consists of: **Deep Ellem Blues, Friend Of The Devil, Spike Driver Blues, Little Sadie, Oh Babe, It Ain't No Lie, I've Been All Around This World, Goodnight Irene.** It's not far off a Dylan set list and I can't believe Garcia didn't re-introduce Dylan to some of these songs.

Further evidence is found on Garcia's ***Almost Acoustic*** 1988 CD. (If you haven't heard it, you'd like it if you like **Good As I Been To You.**) It includes: **Oh Babe, It Ain't No Lie, I've Been All Around This World** and **Diamond Joe.**

Garcia's excellent 1991 CD with David Grisman includes **Friend Of The Devil** and **Two Soldiers.** His equally excellent electric live 1990 CD includes: **Simple Twist Of Fate, I Shall Be Released, Senor, Lucky Old Sun, Tangled Up In Blue.** So, although the influence goes both ways, I don't think enough credit is given to Garcia's influence on Dylan."

These are, I feel, good points, and you may recall my answer to a letter in an earlier issue of *Homer, the slut* where I gave The Grateful Dead great credit for the sudden injection of classics (both self-penned and traditional) to the Dylan set list. I also stated there, and meant it most sincerely folks, that anyone who has written **Friend Of The Devil** and **Black Muddy River** deserves a vote of thanks. Nonetheless, I've never been able to enjoy a Dead album and, although I love hearing Dylan cover their songs, I find their own performances of those same songs weak and insipid. The Dylan and Dead tour was, for me, a low point in Dylan's performances - albeit occasionally shot through with breathtaking renditions.

As for Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers - well, I can take them or leave them. I'd never go out of my way to listen to them but I don't find them too offensive - with the almighty exception of **Spike**. Even **Spike**, though, would take on an attractive allure compared to anything by, the frankly loathsome, Michael Bolton. That leaves me with Mark Knopfler, probably my favourite of the collaborators discussed herein - a comment that will astonish anyone who has had the misfortune to hear one of my rants against the sickly over-professionalism of the tedious Dire Straits. (I do quite like the Notting Hill Billies, though!) On the other hand I've always admired Knopfler's work on **Slow Train Coming** and, though not as unequivocally, **Infidels**.

So, not exactly a gallery of my favourite people! However, for one reason or another Bob Dylan has chosen to work with them and both this obvious fact and the effects on Dylan's artistic output are addressed in this Special Issue.

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## HOMER NEWS

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This issue is somewhat late as it was due to be bundled with **Issue Eight**. Apologies for this; I've got myself on such a tight schedule for the standard issues of *Homer, the slut* now, that I have no time spare for the specials! Every single retailer has increased their demands over the last year. (The Virgin Megastore at Tottenham Court Road is particularly voracious in its appetite for **Homers** where, they've just told me, it sells at over double the rate of any other fanzine.)

The next special is due out with **Issue 11** on February 1st 1994. In order to stop me being tardy again, I've arranged for a group of

people to produce it for me and, since I've suggested the topic, you won't fail to enjoy it, will you? I will give you more details of this in future standard issues.

In the introduction to the last Special Issue, I tried to look forward to this introduction by postulating:

"All of which leaves **Homer**, *the slut* straining at the leash to attempt a more business-like, large circulation approach - but I hold on to that leash wondering if this is the wisest course, worrying that it will lose the feel of "the friendly fanzine" and realising I couldn't personally answer all the letters. Well, when I come to write the review of 1992 we'll see what road I decided on."

I have to admit I'm standing pretty close to the same crossroads described above! Some tentative steps have been taken along the "business route": more shops take **Homer**, *the slut*, you are mailshot if a publication date is held back, the warmline is much busier, I have engaged someone to look after the tax aspects (not so sure I like that one!), I've added a fax to the hardware at home etc.

However, back to the crossroads, I still produce and print the whole 'zine myself and I still answer all your letters. (Shorter answers and less speedy response - but, nonetheless I do my best.) Receiving your letters and input is easily the best part of running the 'zine, though when, on my return from Holland, I went to the mailbox -and it contained 213 items I felt a touch overwhelmed!



If it reads as though as I've discovered a happy compromise then I'm afraid that's not true. Instead what I've done is to stall **Homer's** growth. I believe the last three issues have been the best three and I hope that each one has shown a steady improvement - your letters certainly seem to indicate that you feel it to be so. However, they are also the first three issues that have shown no increase in circulation. All three had a print run of 750, all

three have sold out but I've had no time to run off anymore and have had to start some people's subscriptions an issue later and leave shop orders unfulfilled. The last two issues have sold out with increasing speed and, therefore, **Homer** has been missing from the shelves for long periods - including the period leading up to Christmas.

I must increase the print run from now on, which means that some of my other work load will have to be lessened. Thankfully, there are enough willing people out there for this to happen. Paula Radice has taken over the running of the **Focus On** section and has already delivered it for issue nine and is beginning the research for issue ten. Gillian McLaughlin and Alex & Olive are busily typing away at this very moment (I hope!) reducing the amount of keyboard bashing I normally do. From all this you may gather that I'm trying to follow both paths from the crossroads simultaneously. Who knows? They may join up again further down the way. I may even make myself enough time to get all the back issues out! (The only alternative would be to get the thing printed - I costed this and the cheapest I found would over double the cost of each issue!)

There is still an outstanding problem I have with running **Homer** - and it is the warmline. This has become so busy over the last year that I have to turn my telephone to mute for most of the day and this means that there are a lot of frustrated callers out there - both yourselves and our families, non-Dylan friends, gas board officials etc. In addition, I've been unable to set up my fax line except for a few minutes at a time.

Basically, I need a telephone line dedicated to the warmline - which could then become much more organized with set times of up-dates etc. However, another line is very expensive, both to install and in rental. There are two solutions to this problem - I could increase the price of the magazine to cover the cost or I could change the warmline into an 0891 number where each call costs 36p or 48p per minute. They both have drawbacks - I don't like the idea of the latter and the former is unfair on those who get the 'zine but never 'phone the line. I need to know your feelings on this one - please phone (071-385-1114) or write with your wishes on this.

Thanks for this issue to **Relix**, **Spiral Light**, Jim Heppell, John Potter, Derek Davies, Andrew MacDonald and everyone else who has helped. Also - a special commendation to JRS who sent in the enclosed **Steel Bars** piece for Issue Six and then managed to produce another gem for that issue when I suggested holding back the article for this Special.

Issue Nine should be with you on June 1st; if you are due to re-subscribe before then there will be a reminder with this issue. Issue Nine and Ten have already been allocated a number of fascinating articles and, of course, there's all the reaction to the February European Leg in Issue Nine. Michael Gray, Bob Forryan and JRS have articles in both forthcoming issues and the long promised Paul Williams Interview will be run in Issue Ten. I've even started planning out Issue 11. So have a good Spring, "take care of yourself & get plenty rest..."



The photographs in this introduction are scanned images from the first originals I got from John Hume's extraordinary collection of Belfast, February 1993 shots.

## PEEKING THROUGH STEEL BARS

(If I could only turn back the lock)

*Dream if u can  
a courtyard  
an ocean of violets in bloom  
animals strike curious poses  
they feel the heat  
the heat between me and u*

P.R Nelson

### When Doves Cry

"Hey, man. We're looking for a pad with a dome".

It was an ordinary day in Malibu. Hoods were definitely in. A track suited jogger, twenty five and something, hooded, was making moonstrides along the sidewalk, his anti-roll earpiece blasting the latest Bon Jovi straight from his Walkman right into his memory.

A white Mercedes rolled along Birdview Avenue, this time the chauffeur honked and hollared louder.

"A pad with a dome. You know it?".

The jogger halted, lifted his hood and peered into the rear of the car.

"Wow! ..... Why yeah..... Right along here..... Round the next bend..... Number 7156..... You can't miss it".

Having thus dispensed such breathless directions, the jogger took a second look into the back of the white limousine. "Wow!" he repeated before Bon Jovi and the moonstrides carried him off down the road.

The "Wow" remained posing comfortably on the back seat. A Big Oak of the music business - and he looked the part. The stud in his ear was the sort of diamond you wouldn't see in any High Street jewellery arcade, and his tan was one of those "I can stay for three months on a Greek Island doing sod all 'coz I'm rich and you're only here for a ten day package trip" type of tans that never seem to fade. A Big Oak indeed, his last album was a double, triple Platinum selling over seven million copies, the annual royalty cheque from cover versions of his songs would put weather-proof ceilings over the entire cardboard population of the West End and that diamond stud in his ear had sparkled in the face of almost every famous name that was mentioned in the twentieth anniversary issue of *Rolling Stone* magazine.

"But what's he doing visiting the guy in the dome?" pondered the Malibu jogger as Bon Jovi clicked into auto-reverse, "He's such a small acorn. He ain't done nothing for years. Surely he ain't the guy that Big Oak wants to see?".

Well listen, Mr Malibu, forget the stories you love to read in those trashy Hollywood magazines about how legends became jointed with legends. Forget the one about how Clark Gable danced cheek to cheek with Carole Lombard

before he drove her off in his Dusenbergl Convertible to a night of companionship at the Beverly Wiltshire Hotel; and forget that one about how Howard Hawks invented "The Look" for Lauren Bacall so that Bogart would fall for her. Forget all that dream factory stuff. Good God almighty, that stuff ain't real. But this..... this is the day that Michael Bolton met Bob Dylan.

-----

The purpose of the meeting between this modern day Goliath of the music business and his comparative David was to collaborate in the writing of a song for Bolton's new album *Time, Love and Tenderness*, an album which, following its release in April 1991, spawned at least one number one hit single in the U.S.A.. After much deliberation at Dylan's home in Malibu, and consequent upon a page of extra lyrics being subsequently faxed by Dylan's office to Bolton's office, the joint composition was ultimately completed. The song as finally co-written concerns the dilemma of the song's subject who finds himself imprisoned by the love of someone or something - the "steel bars" of the song's title representing the imaginary bars of a prison cell. The full lyric is as follows:

*In the night I hear you speak  
turn around, you're in my sleep  
Feel your hands inside my soul  
You're holding on and you won't let go  
I've tried running but there's no escape  
Can't bend them, and (I know) I just can't break these...*

**Chorus:**

*Steel bars, wrapped all around me  
I've been your prisoner since the day you found me  
I'm bound forever, 'til the end of time  
Steel bars wrapped around this heart of mine  
Trying hard to recognize  
See the face behind the eyes  
Feel your haunting ways like chains  
'round my heart they still remain  
I'm still running, but there's nowhere to hide  
My love for you has got me locked up inside these.....*



*Chorus:*

*And with every step I take  
Every desperate move I make  
It's clear to me  
What can all my living mean  
When time itself is so obscene  
When time itself don't mean a thing  
I'm still loving you  
Steel bars, wrapped all around me  
I've been your prisoner since the day you found me  
I'm bound forever, 'til the end of time  
Steel bars wrapped around this heart of mine*

This theme of either being imprisoned physically or shackled and bound emotionally has featured large in Dylan's lyrics over the years and, in particular it seems, in the songs that he has co-written with others. The first Dylan album to contain an entire clutch of co-written songs was, of course, *Desire* - released in January 1976 - which, of its total nine songs, seven were co-written with Jacques Levy. The two longest co-written songs from the album are stories of real life characters who both suffered physical imprisonment and, indeed, it was the very fact of that imprisonment that prompted the first song of the album - *Hurricane* to be written. The song concerns the plight of the boxer Rubin (Hurricane) Carter who, to Dylan's continued outrage throughout the song, had been "put in a prison cell, but one time he could-a been The Champion of the World". The second real life character is that lovable gangster Joey Gallo and, in this co-written song, Joey's time behind bars is also described:

*He did ten years in Attica, reading Nietzsche and Wilhelm Reich  
They threw him in the hole one time for tryin' to stop a strike.  
His closest friends were black men 'cause they seemed to understand  
what it's like to be in society with a shackle on your hand.*

It was to be over ten years before another Dylan album was released that would contain more than one co-written song as the much criticized *Knocked Out Loaded* released in July 1986, threw up three co-written of its total ten tracks. For one of these compositions, Dylan teamed up with Carole Bayer Sager, a former partner of Burt Bacharach, himself being one half of a famous song writing duo, to co-compose the song *Under Your Spell* where Dylan seems to be trapped by a spell that he cannot shake and envisages some sort of confinement without communication:

*I'd like to help you, but I'm in a bit of a jam.*

*I'd call you tomorrow if there's 'phones where I am.*

**Knocked Out Loaded** also included a song that Dylan co-wrote with Tom Petty but it was another Dylan/Petty/Campbell song that continued this theme of being trapped or ensnared by something or someone. The song **Jammin' Me**, one of the tracks of Petty's 1987 album **Let Me Up (I've Had Enough)** and opens with the lines:

*You got me, in a corner.*

*You got me, against the wall.*

*I got nowhere to go*

*I got nowhere to fall.*

Then came another collaboration which would appear on a number one record. This time the co-composer was Bono and the song co-written was **Love Rescue Me** which was included in U2's 1988 number one album **Rattle and Hum**. Although it is by no means certain, it is thought that an alternative title for this song is **Prisoner of Love** but perhaps the real song **Prisoner of Love** was a prototype for **Steel Bars**; the song eventually co-written with Michael Bolton. On **Love Rescue Me** Bono (with Dylan backing) pleads a case for being rescued by love rather than concentrating on the state of being imprisoned by love which the title **Prisoner of Love** would imply and indeed the song **Steel Bars** is all about.

In 1991, an inquisitive Dylan fan found that he had some free international line time and he accordingly connected with the U.S. Copyright Office to search the index under "S" for Helena Springs. The information down-loaded was new to the Dylan world and provided details of some previously unlisted songs that Dylan had co-written with Helena Springs. It is now known that the collaboration between Dylan and Springs resulted in at least nineteen co-written songs being: **Baby Give It Up; Brown Skin Girl; Coming From The Heart (The Road Is Long); Her Memory; If I Don't Be There By Morning; Love You Too Much; More Than Flesh And Blood; Responsibility; Someone Else's Arms; Stop Now; Tell Me The Truth One Time; Walk Out In The Rain; The Wandering Kind; What's The Matter?; Without You; Afternoon; Miss Tea And Sympathy; Satisfy Me and Romance Blues.**

A possible further two co-written songs namely **Pain and Love** and **Red Haired Girl** were mentioned in Helena Springs' interview with Chris Cooper, the full text of which appeared in **Endless Road Seven** and a subsequent, much edited, version in **The Telegraph (Thirty Four)**.

So, apart from the front-lawn ditties that were put together by Dylan and the rest of his good old buddies in The Traveling Wilburys (and it is a matter of conjecture as to how much input Dylan had to these songs which appear to have been completed by a process of writing by numbers) it seems that Dylan has co-written more songs with Helena Springs than with any other composer.

None of the nineteen songs that Dylan has co-written with Springs has ever, so far as is known, been recorded in the studio by Dylan and only one of these songs has been performed in concert more than once. The song **Love You Too Much** was sound checked on various occasions in 1978 and performed twice in concert - the first on the 24th September 1978 at Binghamton, New York and the second on the 29th September 1978 at Madison Square Garden, New York. From the tapes of these concerts it seems that Dylan wasn't particularly happy at how the song was performed, after racing through the song at Madison Square Garden Dylan remarked to the audience "We almost put that one right". This lack of confidence in the live version of the song may have been the reason why the song was performed in a shortened version as it will be seen from the lyric book that this co-written song has two extra lines bearing a familiar theme:

*I stand convicted behind the bars of love,  
for me there is no escape, not even mercy from heaven above.*

So we are back to **Steel Bars** and perhaps this begs the question as to why there are continual references to the state of being trapped or imprisoned in songs that Dylan has co-written with others. When Bono was interviewed about his collaboration with Dylan in 1987 he said, about Dylan's songwriting stance:

*He's very hung up on actually being Bob Dylan. He feels he's trapped in his past and, in a way, he is. I mean, no-one asks Smokey Robinson to write a new **Tracks Of My Tears** every album, y'know. But, like, we were trading lines and verses off the top of our heads and Dylan comes out with this absolute classic: "I was listenin' to the Neville Brothers, it was a quarter of eight/ I had an appointment with destiny, but I knew she'd come late/ she tricked me, she addicted me, she turned me on the head/ Now I can't sleep with these secrets, that leave me cold and alone in my bed." Then he goes "Nah, cancel that". Can you believe it? He thought it was too close to what people expect of Bob Dylan.*

The suggestion therefore is that possibly we, as the ardent admirers of Dylan's work, are somehow forcing him into a corner to write a particular kind of song that will fulfil our requirements in order to sustain, and indeed justify, the continued admiration for Dylan's output. This suggestion is enforced by certain lines from the song "Love Rescue Me" that Dylan co-wrote with Bono:

*No man is my enemy  
my own hands imprison me  
Love rescue me.  
Many strangers have I met  
on the road to my regret  
many lost who seek to find themselves in me.  
They ask me to reveal,  
the very thoughts they would conceal  
Love rescue me.*

So is Dylan trying to tell us something by making reference in the various songs to the state of being imprisoned? Is it a camouflaged cry for some kind of personal freedom from our expectations?

It is of course somewhat ironic, and I suppose that it would appeal to Dylan's sense of humour, that if there is an intended "message" to his fans, Dylan is transmitting the message through the mouths of others and is disguising the message by putting it in songs that also bear the name of his co-writers. Although this implies that Dylan has manipulated these co-writers by coercing them into a situation, the true purpose of which they are presumably unaware, it is also somewhat amusing to consider that, with regard to Michael Bolton, the small acorn got it's way over the Big Oak!

But what about this "message", if indeed a message exists at all? Is it fair to suggest that we, as Dylan fans, have imprisoned him into a certain lifestyle, bound him to a certain trait or standard of songs that will satisfy our desires to justify the continued attention to his work. Well, hey Mr Zimmerman, let's put the record straight here. Those who have followed and admired Dylan's work from the 60's, and are still here to tell the tale, have surely favoured his ability to grasp and exploit his personal freedom in his art, rather than urge a restriction of such freedom. We have watched, listened and marvelled at Dylan's innumerable changes over the years - from folk poet to electric rock singer, to country and western balladeer, to Las Vegas megastar, to Gospel Evangelist, to film star, to rock and roll troubadour - and on and on..... He's done it all and he's done it his way.

No, the real truth of the matter is that we, his fans, are the only ones who are imprisoned. Chained and cheated in pursuit of him. Every step he takes, every move he makes is diarized, noted and analysed by us for us. And just when you think you can break free from this endless pursuit, this unabated attention, Dylan changes his code of the road again, sings an old song in a new way, releases an album of different material, and you are back in that box, helpless, peeking through the bars: watching and wondering what's going to happen next. Perhaps you don't really want to be there but there just doesn't seem to be anything you can do about it. You either know it or you don't and those of you who, like me, are imprisoned by this enigma who is walking through and continually disrupting my space and time, you know exactly what I mean don't you?

Whoever it was who wrote those words to **Steel Bars**; whether it was Michael Bolton, Bob Dylan or even William Blake or Arthur Rimbaud after they had queued for a shout down the celestial conduit; wherever those words came from, they seem to me as if they were written from the bench in this prison cell where I sit and watch Dylan's every changing move:

*In the night I hear you speak  
turn around you're in my sleep*

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## "Let the echo decide"

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*PREFACE: The following remarks comment on the background to the 1987 collaboration between Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead. If anyone is encouraged to check out the Dead for themselves, so much the better; it would be interesting if anyone else can shed light on earlier versions of some of the songs referred to. The cosmetic headings are quoted from assorted Hunter / Garcia songs.*

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I am one of the (apparently few - to judge from questionnaires and certain comments which have appeared in the Dylan press - but nonetheless I would guess happy) Dylan fans who also appreciate the Grateful Dead. The "truly Dead" attitude evinced by some Dylan aficionados I have found puzzling since when you think about the American tradition of "folk" and "blues" music Dylan and the Dead are both coming from the same place. Different though they are, if you enjoy the music of one it would seem natural to appreciate the music of the other, since it appears to me that there is a definite affinity, and there clearly is mutual appreciation. (This does not mean that I think Dylan does not have different strings to his bow or that the Dead have not explored different musical avenues!)

An essential and integral part of the Grateful Dead - though in recent times, it would seem, a somewhat more remote part - is Robert Hunter. He is not a member of the group, but Hunter has provided some brilliant lyrics for the definitive songs of the Grateful Dead. He has also established himself as a solo performer. He has performed not only songs used by the Dead but also a whole varied range of different types of material, certainly not afraid to experiment, from the "rock novel" (poor phrase) "Amagamalin Street" (which includes "Roseanne", the best side long album track since "Sad Eyed Lady"), to the poem narrated to a musical accompaniment "The Voyage of the Marie Helena".

Hunter tends to be teamed with Jerry Garcia for the song writing which has contributed the main body of the Dead's extensive and varied repertoire. This repertoire has been built up during the Dead's own "Never Ending Tour" which has continued almost unbroken since the late sixties; a repertoire which ranges from a number of Dylan cover versions through various country songs, folk songs and blues to a number of popular songs from the Stones, Beatles, Spencer Davis. Bob Weir has also contributed a body of songs, mostly in collaboration with John Barlow, that well-known VR expert. It is not an exaggeration to state that in the course of their musical "long strange trip" the Grateful Dead constitute an institution that has encouraged all sorts of technological, sociological and charitable endeavour.

In view of my affection for the Dead, which, as a matter of personal history, had originally been encouraged and fostered by my interest in Dylan, it was therefore a great pleasure to find Dylan teaming up with the Dead in 1987<sup>1</sup>. It was an even greater pleasure when I saw the set lists - not to mention when I heard the tapes! - and again when I finally heard the rehearsal tapes.

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<sup>1</sup> It seemed a logical culmination of Dylan's and the Dead's progress to me, one of those things daydreamed about but never really expected to materialize! What a shame the hypothetical appearance with the Allman Brothers did not come to pass - now those boys really know how to end a tune, in a way Dylan has been practising occasionally and effectively on the Never Ending Tour!

## "COME HEAR UNCLE JOHN'S BAND"

My interest in the Dead - of whom up to then I had been ignorant - had been stimulated by that wonderful guest appearance by Garcia at the Fox Warfield in 1980 and the version of "To Ramona" in particular, with that steel guitar which plucks at the emotions, together with Bob's introductory comments. Dylan of course said that he was a great admirer and supporter of Jerry Garcia's group - and I have invariably found Dylan's comments worth following up - and that he had played with them a few times before: so far, to my knowledge, the biographers have not shed any light on these musical encounters; maybe Dylan had in mind some informal sessions like the later "rehearsals" for the 1987 shows at the Dead's "Club Le Front" base in San Rafael. These rehearsals which have emerged on tape bear little resemblance to the shows that later took place but they do illustrate the affinity and empathy over a wide range of music.

A snippet of factual information has also emerged from the Club Front: for two decades I had been puzzled by Dylan's reference to Olatunji ("what I want to know, Mr football man, is what you think about ..."). Olatunji is in fact a percussionist and long time acquaintance of Mickey Hart, who has an anthropological interest in the drum [and who is one of the two drummers of the Dead, along with Bill Kreutzman]. A photograph can be seen in a History of the Grateful Dead - one of the books celebrating a 25th anniversary - of Dylan and Olatunji outside the Dead's studio in San Rafael; they are described as label-mates at CBS in the '60s. [The photo has also appeared on the cover of "The Telegraph".]

My interest in the Grateful Dead was further encouraged by co-incidence: I was just beginning to find out about the joys of (Dylan) tape collecting; my Fox Warfield tape was obtained from a Deadhead who was able to put me on to a selection of Grateful Dead records and tapes. About the same time I happened to come across Blair Jackson's book, "The Music Never Stopped" - an introduction to what the Grateful Dead are all about which I would heartily recommend. There is of course no zeal like that of a convert...!

Strange it is that in spite of the similarities and affinity which may be identified between Dylan and the Dead there is stark contradiction in their attitude to tapes and recording. It may be that a fundamental difference is reflected in the way Dylan has commented on his need to "make it" on his own rather than in a group: the Dead <sup>2</sup> have stayed together as a group and expanded "family" since the sixties; a democratic institution which fosters participation and diversity with an exemplary tolerance <sup>3</sup>. Taping of their shows has for the most part been allowed, actively assisted, in spite of the fact that the Dead were badly burned by a bootleg version of their first album on their own record label (a project which Dylan was reportedly considering at one time and which the Dead put into

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<sup>2</sup> Hunter and Garcia go back to the start of the '60s; the core of the Grateful Dead, Jerry Garcia - guitar / vocals, Bob Weir - guitar / vocals, Phil Lesh - bass / occasional vocals, Bill Kreutzman - drums, have stayed together since the mid sixties; Mickey Hart, a second drummer for most of the duration. Ron "Pigpen" McKernan died in the early '70s having provided harmonica, keyboards and a general hard blues presence; keyboards have been played by Tom Constanten, Keith Godchaux (whose wife Donna sang backing vocals - she can be heard incidentally on Elvis' "Suspicious Minds"), Brent Mydland, Bruce Hornsby (yes, that Bruce Hornsby) and Vince Wellneck.

<sup>3</sup> This may sound like hyperbole, but a couple of quotations illustrate the point: (Blair Jackson) "the Dead pretended they could run a company the way they structured their own live shows"; (Jerry Garcia) "my feeling about it as a Grateful Dead project is: whenever anyone says "Hey, man, I want to do this" they can do it".

effect - briefly (there is no success like failure)); this led, I think, to an aversion to tapers for a while though ultimately the Dead appreciate the differences between pirating and bootlegging and taping. Dylan's (official) live albums have scarcely done justice to his live performances whereas Deadheads will tell you that the Dead's studio albums are not the peak of their output; albums recorded live have appeared regularly and at some length: "Europe '72" and "Without A Net" (USA '90) are both triple albums. Though, as with Dylan's official live records, even these albums pale in the face of the best of what the tapers have.

The Dead seem happiest when performing live - a fact which has led to the obvious oxymoron "Live Dead" - and would no doubt agree with Dylan's comments on that theme. Jerry Garcia has made some fascinating and informative comments on performing - for example, you want to repeat a particular song until you achieve a perfect rendition; this comment seemed relevant to me when I heard Dylan's "Tears of Rage" from Paris 1990! (I thought that this was the definitive performance and Dylan never need play that song again - well, it is impossible to be right all the time!) The profound hope - or realistic expectation - seems to be that that masterpiece will never be painted!

#### "IF YOU GET CONFUSED LISTEN TO THE MUSIC PLAY"

While Sony have offered The Bootleg Series Volumes One to Three, the Grateful Dead have so far put out two instalments of a projected series "From The Vaults"; a complete concert from 1975 and as full a sampling as possible from a couple of 1968 shows. Dan Healy (a long time soundman of the Dead) has described this project in terms that makes the fan of Dylan and the Dead wish if only the same approach could be applied to the former as well <sup>4</sup>. Apart from the intention to publish a series of recordings to document the Dead as performers Healy referred to the aspiration to make the rows and rows of archived tapes available on request to the discerning applicant. (The Dead have never had over-much respect for laws of practicability - see footnote 3!)

Musically there is an affinity between Dylan and the Dead. It is not just that the Dead have included creditable "covers" of Dylan songs in their mighty repertoire. What is more fundamental is that they have drawn on the same roots and sources held in common, including traditional folk music, both "negro blues" and "white folk" (to impose a crudely simplistic distinction). A number of particular songs have been performed by both Dylan and the Dead. "Stealin'" and "Death Don't Have No Mercy" for example were both performed by the Minnesota Dylan; the former was the Dead's first single, the latter is on "Live Dead", and indeed "#2 From The Vault"; Dylan and the Dead have both been prepared to dig deep and wide into popular music - from Hank Williams to the Beatles. The non-Dylan songs on the San Rafael rehearsal tape could have come from either or both camps.

It is perhaps fair to say - without disrespect to the rest of the group - that Jerry Garcia is the essence of the Grateful Dead, the guiding though in no sense dominating element in the Dead, and his appreciation of Dylan has been explicitly stated in a number of fascinating comments. When the Dead have been resting from the extensive touring most of the members seem to have their own particular interests to pursue, and Garcia has kept on keeping on prodigiously with solo projects of several types. Various JGB (Jerry Garcia Band) incarnations have appeared, mainly for live performance but also on record. A bootleg from the mid '70s pairs knock-out 15 minute versions of "The Harder They

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<sup>4</sup> In an interview published in the American magazine "Relix" which is "Dead related" (though not exclusively so).

Come" - which has also been a rare highlight of the Never Ending Tour - and "Simple Twist of Fate". "Live At The Keystone" 1972 includes "Positively 4th Street" taken slow with David Grisman on electric mandolin <sup>5</sup>. Garcia's most recent solo products include a JGB double live CD, with four Dylan covers plus "Lucky Old Sun", and an acoustic album, reunited with David Grisman, which includes "Two Soldiers", a song performed live at the Fox Warfield by this pairing along with "Handsome Molly", "Man Of Constant Sorrow", "When First Unto This Country" (!!! I still have not heard a tape of this show, 2/2/91) <sup>6</sup>. On one of his eclectic solo albums - his own "Self Portrait"s? - Garcia includes songs by Chuck Berry, Van Morrison and Irving Berlin - all suitable candidates for the "variation spots" on Dylan's Never Ending Tour.

Stunning though it undoubtedly is, Dylan's Never Ending Tour and the range of material tackled along the way has perhaps come as less of a surprise to aficionados of the Grateful Dead. I have nothing but admiration for the concept as performed by Dylan and repeat my appreciation of the musical experimentation and song variation which has gone down. Experimentation and improvisation in the instrumental breaks are at least as welcome as a well oiled perfection sometimes is - even if the rest of the band are not following on occasion - and "New Morning" is a successful example with its extended intro. In the same way as famous and glorious examples abound of Dylan's harmonica breaks, so the Grateful Dead are renowned for extended "jamming" in the course of their shows as different tunes merge and emerge - sometimes it works really well ...

A lack of predictability in set lists as well as performance is a factor common to Dylan of the Never Ending Tour and the Dead. "Pretty Peggy-O" has been performed by Dylan with a gap of almost thirty years intervening; the song has been an occasional inclusion in the Dead's set over that period as has "Jack-A-Roe" ("Jack o' Roses"?) - also performed by Joan Baez. The song is similar in theme to "The Female Rambling Sailor" (at least it has the same folk motif of woman disguised as man takes to sea), though with a happy ending, and given Dylan's predilection for including folk songs it is maybe only a matter of time until it is debuted by Dylan.

### "YOU CAN TELL WITHOUT ASKING WHO'S INTO THE BLUES"

Amid the variety of songs on the Never Ending Tour a couple of Grateful Dead songs of the Garcia-Hunter variety have been included by Dylan, though "Deal" is not one of them; but even this song indicates another point of correspondence. At first it was reported to be the Jerry Garcia / Robert Hunter song, but the Wicked Messenger has rightly described it as an old bluegrass song, with, as it happens, the same chorus. "Old And In The Way" was Garcia's bluegrass (banjo) outing - a group and an album of that name "searching out that "high lonesome sound" of Bill Monroe, Flatt and Scruggs, the Stanley Brothers and other idols" <sup>7</sup>; one of the many musicians whom Dylan sought out in

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<sup>5</sup> One of the (few?) cover versions of Dylan songs worth listening to more than once: the same sessions also include "It Takes A Lot To Laugh" and a version of "The Harder They Come" which - how can they do this! - is faded early.

<sup>6</sup> Of these four songs: "Two Soldiers" is lyrically identical in Garcia's as in Dylan's (full) version - surely some narrative has been omitted?; "Handsome Molly" is one of those incredibly moving songs performed with wonderful maturity on the Gaslight Tapes; "Man Of Constant Sorrow" again has been revived by Dylan for the Never Ending Tour, particularly in a marvellously auspicious performance of that first night in Concord; "When First Unto This Country" made a powerful entrance later - I see that this song was recorded by Happy Traum.

<sup>7</sup> David Grisman quoted on "Old And In The Way", recorded in 1973.



the early '70s was none other than Bill Monroe; Flatt and Scruggs featured Dylan in a better documented appearance; the Stanley Brothers have provided a couple of songs - I believe that they recorded "Man Of Constant Sorrow" as well as "Rank Strangers". That sort of folk / blues inspiration, from which bluegrass might trace its descent, is featured in a more recent incarnation as JGB Almost Acoustic - which again resulted in a most worthwhile live CD; songs include Jimmie Rodgers' Blue Yodel #9, "Deep Elem Blues", "Oh Babe It Ain't No Lie", "I've Been All Around This World" and "Oh The Wind and The Rain" (the only song the guitar could play in "Percy's Song").

To me the distinctive part of the Grateful Dead is the Garcia vocal and guitar (though I cannot emphasise enough the wish not to belittle the contribution of the rest of the group) and in particular the songs of Jerry Garcia (music) and Robert Hunter (lyrics). The 1970 albums "American Beauty" and "Workingman's Dead" - which include the original "Friend of the Devil" - though not perhaps typical of the Dead's output are a good place to start to illustrate my point. Some would argue that the 1980 Fox Warfield concerts are one of the high points in Dylan's career; about the same time the Dead were marking a 15th anniversary with a series of shows at the Fox Warfield and New York's Radio City. The usual two electric sets - usually two 90 minute tapes are required - were augmented by an opening acoustic set; this format had been used to remarkable effect in the early '70s for a time with the opening set provided by the New Riders of the Purple Sage<sup>8</sup> - which at that time comprised largely members of the Dead including Garcia practising steel guitar (a chance to hear his playing on "Dirty Business (at Coal Creek)" should not be missed!).

Two double albums later appeared on Arista to commemorate these 1980 shows: "Dead Set" - electric, which includes a different arrangement of "Friend Of The Devil"; "Dead Reckoning" - acoustic, which features "I've Been All Around This World" [Lulu not Hattie is called to attend to the door!] and "Oh Babe It Ain't No Lie" (unfortunately one of these songs was omitted from the CD versions); as good a place as any to start with the Dead. However, comprising selections from different shows these albums are not representative of the Grateful Dead live; the second set of a Dead show is almost invariably a continuous array of established pairings and unexpected tunes flowing with more or less smooth transitions, along with the central "Drums and Space", a free expression period of the mother of drum solos and assorted noise<sup>9</sup>. In one of their Wembley 1990 shows the Dead paired - if my memory serves - "Mama Tried" (usually matched with "Big River", which Dylan has also tried on the Never Ending Tour) with a version of "Maggie's Farm" in which most of the band take a verse. But perhaps I can choose a symbol by which the Dead are typified for me - in so far as that is possible for so diverse and long ranging an entity! - their "China Cat Sunflower / I Know You Rider" which has appeared regularly over the years: the Dead are renowned for segueing or running songs together, more or less seamlessly, and this is one of the best executed examples (it has appeared on both of the albums "Europe" and "Net" referred to above). "China Cat" is one of Hunter's early surreal lyrics whereas "Rider" is a traditional song, recorded both by The Byrds and Hot Tuna. Ten to fifteen minutes of distinctive music encompass the innovation and respect for tradition of the Grateful Dead.

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<sup>8</sup> later as a group in their own right responsible for the best version of "Farewell Angelina" until the emergence of Dylan's; the same album includes a fine rendition of the pleasant traditional song "Going Round The Horn", a song somewhat in the mould of "Farewell (Leaving of Liverpool)".

<sup>9</sup> Has anyone out there listened all through to Neil Young's "Arc / Weld" feedback? Dead "Space" has developed since the feedback included on "Live Dead" - their soundmen have even put out a composite album "Infra Red Roses" which features the percussion and instrumental essays.

## "TOKEN RHYME SUGGESTING RHYTHM"

In view therefore of my affection for the Grateful Dead, which evolves naturally into appreciation of Robert Hunter, it was a further pleasure to find Dylan including a couple of Robert Hunter songs on "Down In The Groove", that much - and unfairly - maligned offering. Incidentally Larry Klein who played bass on that album has previously supported Robert Hunter in concert and in his one time backing group "Comfort" (but more than that of him I do not know).

It is a shame that - as far as I know - we have no more information about the Dylan / Hunter collaboration to match the Michael Bolton "Steel Bars" media hype (relatively speaking!). It may be of course that the "Silvio" / "Ugliest Girl" connection between Dylan and Hunter was pretty remote: it appears that whereas Hunter and Garcia have in the past worked together on some of their songs (Hunter did for a time live and travel - "Truckin'" around I should say - with the happy family that constitutes the Dead) the deal has latterly consisted in Hunter "handing over" a bunch of lyrics for Garcia to supply the music. Indeed that seems to be the case with these Dylan songs, judging from a comment by Garcia I have seen quoted. But I can't believe that Robert Hunter would not have some interesting things to say about the matter! (I am you will realise an incurable optimist - an optimism justified in part by the eventual appearance of the "Dylan and the Dead" album but more fully by the liberation of the Club Front rehearsal tape!).

"Truckin'" was actually a song composed by Hunter to chronicle incidents that befell the Dead in their travels; he did speak about the notion to update the lyrics from time to time; in practice this did not happen and the song has remained unchanged. It is perhaps surprising that there has not been more lyric variation whether from Dylan or the Dead. There have been "mental blocks" and on the spot improvisations, and editing or conflating of verses; "Tangled Up In Blue" has been tampered with; "I Shall Be Released" acquired temporarily a wonderful new verse; but it may be that only Dylan's "Serve Somebody" has come near achieving that concept of "Truckin'" - though given the nature of the song emphasising that the same truth applies whoever you are, the analogy is not a good one.

## "SING ME A SONG OF MY OWN"

My delight can probably be imagined when it was reported that Dylan was performing Hunter / Garcia songs: "Friend of the Devil" and more recently "West LA Fadeaway" and "Black Muddy River". The Australian performance of "The Lady of Carlisle" also suggests an intriguing Robert Hunter connection. It could be one of the songs from the old folky days <sup>10</sup> - like "Fennario" or "Stealin'" - that Dylan / Garcia / Hunter may have in common from similar sources. But Hunter recorded "The Lady of Carlisle" for an excellent solo acoustic album (c.1976) which also includes his version of "Terrapin Station" - his lyrics for the Garcia / Hunter song which appears on the Dead's album of the same name. (To be precise different members of the Dead are sometimes credited with contributing to some of the Hunter / Garcia songs, and this happens with "Terrapin Station" - some of the Dead's early songs are credited to a "composite" of the whole band - but the lyrics are essentially Robert Hunter's.)

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<sup>10</sup> Garcia and Hunter first met in 1961 and played together as a "folk duo" and in various bluegrass ensembles; Garcia can even be heard as half of a "folk duo" with his wife at that time, Sarah.

For "Terrapin Station" Hunter takes the story of "The Lady of Carlisle" and weaves in and out to comment on the role of the story-teller and of inspiration to profoundly beautiful effect, an effect also achieved by Hunter from the stage in a version of "Fennario" which was combined with his own "Dire Wolf", and in a performance of his own "It Must Have Been The Roses" merging with some Rabbin Burns lyrics. The Dead make an excellent version of "Terrapin Station", though not using all of Hunter's lyrics, preferably live, since the album version has some additional dubbing of choral voices and orchestration with strange, and generally regarded as heavy handed, results (by Keith Olsen in this case, not Arthur Baker!). I have also seen <sup>11</sup> the lyrics to an alternative version of "The Lady of Carlisle" where the lions' den is set in the Tower of London which at one time served as the prototype London zoo, I believe.

The lyrics to this London version are quite different from "The Lady of Carlisle" but Dylan's version is almost exactly the same as Hunter's, suggesting that they both had it from the same source. It may be that Dylan's version is the more authentic since Hunter - I guess - twice interjects an impassioned "Don't let me down, don't let me down, don't let me down, sweet love, don't let me down", and says that the second seafaring brother is "Known on the deck as the Jack o' Roses". The Wicked Messenger has reported that the song was collected by the Lomaxes and also goes back in the ballad and broadside tradition - the source of the London version - and cited a recording of the song unknown to me.

#### "LET MY INSPIRATION FLOW"

Bob Dylan is a storyteller, a narrator of all manner of tales, standing in a long line of tradition but making his own unique contribution; he has commented on the power of some of the traditional stories and contributed his own; he has referred to the evocative power of gaps in a narrative. What Robert Hunter seems to have done - uniquely for all I know - with some of his songs is to take a traditional song or folk motif and comment explicitly on it, filling in the narrative or alluding directly to it. In "Terrapin Station" he presents the story-teller's narrative as a story within the song; after a plea for inspiration (to flow until the tale is told) the story-teller is spinning his tale, conjuring up visions "until things we've never seen will seem familiar": at the conclusion of the lady's test:

"That's how it stands today / You decide if he was wise ... (the storyteller's) task is to shed light / Not to master".

and finally, before the song plunges off into consideration of inspiration and the mystery symbolism of "Terrapin Station", this comment on the audience expectation:

"Since the end is never told / We pay the teller off in gold / In hopes that he'll return / But he cannot be bought or sold";

it may be concluded that the storyteller cannot think for his audience, they have to decide, and this part of the song closes with a suitable verdict on which to end this essay:

"... Faced with mysteries dark and vast / Statements just seem vain at last...".

Jim Heppell, August 1990.

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<sup>11</sup> Thanks to Spiral Light, the excellent Grateful Dead 'zine.

REFERENCES FROM JIM HEPPELL'S ARTICLE

# RELIX

a US "professionally produced" magazine may have started out as a Dead Fanzine but, though it is still "Dead based", covers a more or less loosely related range. For sale in Tower, and Terrapin Truckin', Crouch End, London

## Spiral Light

essential reading for anyone interested in the Grateful Dead - is available on subscription from Flat 3, 22 Chester Road, Gloucester, Glos, GL4 7AY. For sale in Virgin Megastore, Tottenham Court Rd, London.

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# CRAWDADDY! is back !!!

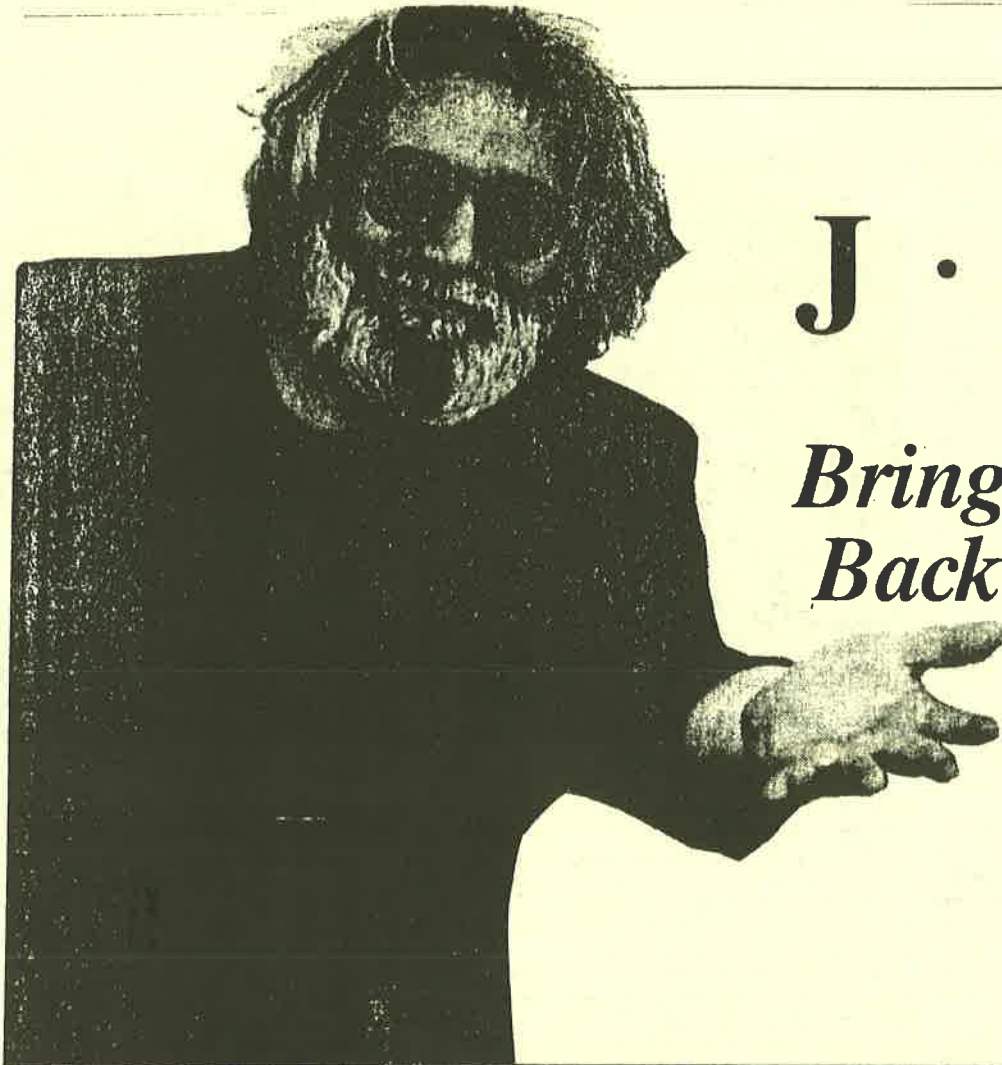
Winter 1993 saw the appearance of the first issue of the new series of *Crawdaddy!* - it is \$4:00 per issue or \$12 for a year's subscription (four issues). Add \$1 per issue if non-USA and if you wish airmail service.

*This new incarnation is a newsletter ; the editor will write much but not all of each issue. The purpose as it was in 1966 is to use our common enthusiasm for and interest in new music as a basis for intimate and honest communication. "Our" means editor, writer, readers. This publication is dedicated to serving the spirit of music, that which rewards us and inspires us as we listen. It is not meant to serve the music business, and will accept no advertising.*

The above paragraph is a quote from the editorial address at the end of this first issue of the new series, some 27 years after the original *Crawdaddy!*, The next issue is out in May, the first issue contains an excellent, in depth, interview of Good As I Been To You.

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# J · F · K

## *Bringing It All Back Home*

by Tim Cain

**John F. Kennedy Stadium Philadelphia, Pennsylvania July 10, 1987**

**O**N July 10, close to a hundred-thousand people descended on JFK Stadium in Philadelphia for a concert starring Bob Dylan and The Grateful Dead. The show was part of a tour coinciding with the release of *In The Dark*, the Dead's first studio album in seven years. More importantly, though, it presented two giants of the 60s counterculture together before an audience that included thousands of young people just cutting their philosophical teeth on U-2, Dire Straits and the Iran-Contra hearings.

The rumblings of the emergence of a new, highly conscious generation have been intuited in many quarters. Recent interviews of musicians who broke ground in the late 60s demonstrate that something's up among young people, and part of it concerns an interest in the free-flowing, improvisational lyric and musical styles being rediscovered by kids who weren't even born when The Airplane first took off and The Dead first rattled their bones.

Without ignoring the formation of campus Ollie North fans clubs, a more discerning onlooker quickly notices that a growing minority of young people are rejecting the pablum being fed them by the attorneys and accountants who once again seem to have taken control of the airwaves. Radio stations continue to allow experts to tell them what music is mediocre enough not to offend listeners or

sponsors, but Dylan and The Dead keep on trucking down the golden road to unlimited devotion, packing halls, selling albums.

Jerry Garcia and Dylan, each in his own way, have been avatars of the avant-garde, heirs to the Beat generation they admired and proponents of free expression and experience. Twenty years ago, The Summer of Love not only debuted some of the most creative, talented musicians around but revealed an entire subculture that had developed almost unnoticed by the public. And Dylan and Garcia were central figures within it.

Almost out of nowhere, legions of recklessly dressed and groomed people poured into the streets, as if on cue as part of some well-orchestrated conspiracy to assault the sensibilities and values of an older, middle America. Folksinger Phil Ochs was right in saying that there was an America that was "ossifying, growing harder and collapsing." And as it grew older, Ochs said, the people "just got uglier and uglier." What The Summer of Love showed was that a very large number of young people had begun to build a new America, young, flexible and beautiful: a phoenix from the ashes.

The roots of that movement were firmly planted in the "beatification" of life Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and so many other beats had preached and lived. To some degree, Dylan and Garcia were handed the

torch and have run with it for more than 20 years. Much of that running has been *in the dark*. Critics who were baffled by Dylan's inclusion of a song about Lenny Bruce on a "Christian" album or who wondered at Garcia's walking offstage in the middle of sets last year need to brush up on their Kerouac.

In any case, deadheads, Dylan freaks and a new generation of young people needed no translators or analysts at the July concert. When Dylan sauntered on stage, bereted, bearded, he was in his element. Garcia, older and wiser than the Captain Trips who pranced the streets of San Francisco in 1967, was a perfect complement to the less-righteous, still prophetic Dylan. Watching the two face each other on the huge video screens, I was struck by the fact that these two men have had a greater effect on the country than all of the sociologists, generals and presidents who came and went in the past few decades. If they were, as the newspaper writers said, subdued, it probably was a result of their own humbling understanding that this was true.

My last Grateful Dead concert was in 1968, a year later than the Summer of Love explosion. Much of the optimism and idealism of the year before had begun to fade. Martin Luther King was dead. It was sometime in June or early July, and I and a few other Great Society parolees made our way through the crowded, jangling streets of Greenwich Village. As we

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walked up to the box office of the Fillmore East, a diminutive fairy-like woman told us to save our money and come to Central Park the next day where The Airplane would be playing for free.

We took her advice and were surprised to find out that The Grateful Dead and the Paul Butterfield Blues Band also were performing. The park resembled the assembly of the Sioux nations. The sweet aroma of marijuana wafted through the air, as tempting as Jacob's stew, and the smiles and warmth were as spontaneous as servers' responses in a Latin Mass.

Butterfield's band wailed as sorrowful and soulful as an electrified Lightning Hopkins, and when The Jefferson Airplane lit down on the stage, Grace Slick flapped the wings of her black cap or mantilla like a butterfly-bat as she seemed buoyed on the waves of soaring spirits issuing from the guitars of Kaukonen and Casady.

But what I best remember was the closing performance — a super-charged concert by The Dead. When Garcia introduced the band members, the thousands of voices cheering and yipping were like "the sound of many waters" in the book of Daniel. White helmeted cops, clubs in hand, formed a barricade around the stage to protect the group from the Armies of the Night whose enthusiasm threatened to overwhelm them.

My clouded impression of that concert, dulled by the years in between, was that it wasn't a performance at all. It was a ceremony presided over by The Dead and shared with the acolyte audience. Individuals and groups whirled in a dance as cosmic as that of the cowgirls of Krishna, in which Pig Pen stood in for the blue angel, his harp begging the dancers on.

When Pig held a high-pitched note, blowing up a speaker with a puff of smoke, the audience howled, and in response, he did it again to end the song that finished the set. Jerry encouraged the crowd to cool it and leave as the police had told him that trouble would mean the end of free rock concerts in the park.

Well, in the past 19 years a lot of the joy and idealism of those days has passed. There have been so many casualties in the peaceable battle, Pig Pen included. Oliver North has supplanted John Lennon as an icon — "Calliban casts out Ariel" — but The Dead are still playing in the band, and the tribes still gather around the medicine men of rock 'n' roll. Hunter's lyrics reflect the passages, but they are as genuine and compassionate as those he has written throughout the dark years.

The same can be said of Dylan. His exploration of spiritual themes has enhanced his understanding of his own creations bordering on the mystical anyhow. "Shot of Love" is certainly the best rocker Dylan has ever produced and it is cogent, powerful, and, as usual, politically correct. "Slow Train," as apocalyptic as anything he has ever written, can be heard whistling in the background of The Dead's "West L.A. Fadeaway," a haunting song that *The New York Post* stated takes on "chilling dimensions" in concert.

Maybe the single element that has kept Dylan's and The Dead's followings so loyal over the years is their integrity. Even when they haven't lived up to their own standards, fans say, "That's a throw away, but listen to the next one."

Another thing Dylan and Garcia share is their struggle and victory over drug addiction and death. In 1967, Dylan broke his neck in a motor-



JFK

cycle accident which should have killed him, and rumors spread that he was in fact dead or permanently disabled. The bootlegged "base-ment tapes" put the lie to that, but he emerged from the calamity a different person. Exactly when he kicked heroin I am not sure, but he alludes to "taking the cure" in "Sara."

Garcia also had a tussle both with addiction and death. Following reprimands and offers of help from friends, especially other band members, Jerry began to realize he was trapped. In a recent interview with *Rolling Stone*, he speaks of all the people who cared about him while he just continued to fuck around.

Last year, after several stage walkoffs similar to those of David Crosby, deadheads became seriously worried about Garcia. Then one night he simply lapsed into a diabetic coma from which he was not expected to recover. Five days later he did. As with Dylan's vertebrae injury, Garcia's illness was serious enough to cause speculation as to whether he would ever be able to play again. But both men broke through the wall of pain to survive.

Survival and life are what the Dylan/Dead tour is all about. The two battle-weary musicians face each other and what is there are two larger-than-life characters who have shaped their times and have been shaped by seeing things through. From my seat in JFK, they appeared as ants, only visible because of the massive television screens, but their faces showed hard-earned lines chiseled by the experience of sticking to their guns.

The lyrics of the songs they chose emphasized this. Throughout the show, consisting of one two-and-a-half hour session by The Dead alone, an hour of Dylan backed by The Dead, and an encore by The Grateful Dead, there was an undercurrent of staring down the darkness. Garcia and Dylan, usually smiling wryly as they deliver lyrics about the absurdity of existence, looked stonemasoned, jaws set with purpose as they sang and played, except occasionally when they were swept away by the irrepressible drive of the music.

Bob Weir also delivered his and John Barlow's "Throwing Stones" with the intensity with which it was written, almost a throwback to the

Pooneil songs of The Airplane and favorably comparable to some of Dylan's prophetic songs. The lyrics ask us to picture the earth as a bright blue sphere in space but then asks us to take a closer look:

*"A peaceful place or so it  
looks from space,  
A closer look reveals  
the human race.  
Full of hope, full of grace  
is the human face,  
But afraid we may lay our  
home to waste."*

Weir and Barlow's song warns of the precariousness of life on the planet in the nuclear age, describing the subconscious but discomfiting intuition felt by the 80s generation:

*"There's a fear down here  
we can't forget.  
Hasn't got a name just yet.  
Always awake, always around,  
Singing; ashes, ashes,  
all fall down."*

Reaching back to his sixth album, two decades old, Dylan confronted the audience with his "Ballad of a Thin Man," as topical in the 80s as when it was written. Society has gotten caught up in pursuit of careers and personal interests while the world situation is spinning out of control. The lyrics speak from the perspective of someone who understands these societal games to be a sideshow and Dylan invites the inflated, I believe including the new, hip generation, into the balcony to watch the befuddled Jones as he struggles to understand his plight.

And still there is that unnamed fear of Weir's song humming in the background. Like an Old Testament prophet, Dylan points his finger at his listeners, calling on them to listen to the sound, to identify and challenge the fear and confusion:

*"You should be made  
to wear earphones,  
Because something is  
happening here  
And you don't know what it is:  
Do you, Mr. Jones?"*

Not only did Dylan's choice of song in this

case complement and expand on some of those performed by The Dead, but Garcia's guitar and the backup of the rest of the band lent drama to it in a way that directed it to the audience. The Dead's playing resurrected the dusty lyric in a way Dylan himself would have been hard pressed to do.

Too, the concert was well-balanced, not an overdose of heavy content. When The Dead launched into "New, New Minglewood Blues," the band's downhome blues influence came through, bringing those in the audience still sitting to their feet. Pig Pen's spirit must have nodded his approval. And down on the sports field, hundreds of people danced in shamanic ecstasy as I had seen them do in Central Park almost 20 years earlier.

Following a simple, traditional blues format, the basic black sexuality of the lyrics raged against the Puritanism now reinforced by the AIDS scare:

*"I was born in a desert,  
raised in a lion's den.  
I was born in a desert,  
raised in a lion's den.  
Well, my number-one occupation  
is stealing women from their men."*

Dylan took his turn at the genre, pulling out of his magical bag a surrealistic blues song from *Blonde On Blonde*, his most celebrated and ignored album. "Stuck Inside of Mobile With the Memphis Blues Again" is rife with elements of the absurd, and his performance of it was another of the many times Dylan returned to this most productive, least understood period of his writing:

*"And I say, 'Ah, come on, now, you know  
you know about my debutante.'*

*And she says, 'Your debutante  
knows what you need, but I know  
what you want.'*

*Ah, Mâma, Can this really  
be the end,*

*To be stuck inside of Mobile  
with the Memphis blues again."*

He also made excellent use of the acid-rock artistry of The Grateful Dead by singing a hard-rocking version of "All Along the Watchtower," à la Jimi Hendrix. Like many of the lyrics written by Robert Hunter, Dylan's "Watchtower" flows in a stream of haunting images hinting at some veiled message, but deliberately dream-like and archetypal:

*"All along the watchtower,  
princes kept the view,  
While all the women came  
and went, barefoot servants too.*

*Outside in the cold distance,  
a wildcat did growl.*

*Two riders were approaching;  
the wind began to howl.*

Dylan also performed another song from his *John Wesley Harding* album, "The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest." Released in the fall following *The Summer of Love*, when most artists were experimenting with the extended perimeters of new recording techniques, *JWH* is primarily acoustical.

His first album in nearly two years and the follow up to the artsy *Blonde On Blonde*, the songs were exceptionally well-received and covered by a number of folk singers and electric bands. So it was a stroke of genius to work out on some of these songs with the band that had been at the forefront of psychedelic rock in 1976 when Dylan was holed up in

Woodstock. And when The Dead was not electrifying Dylan's folkier songs, they contributed their own brand of country-western influence, with Jerry Garcia playing soothing tones on pedal steel guitar.

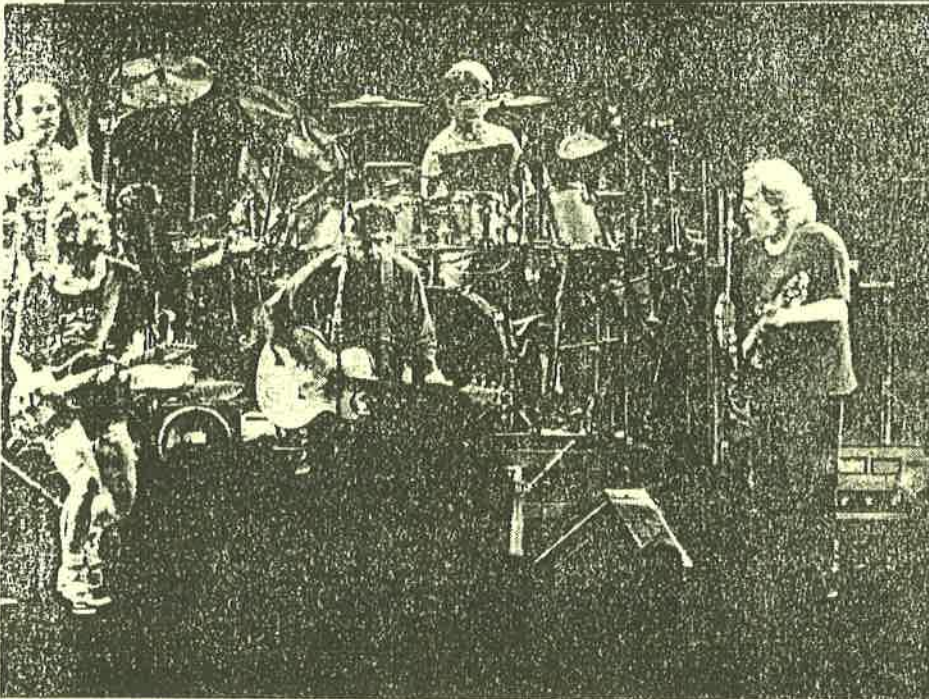
Besides the songs, the performances and the artists themselves, the concert recaptured the sense of community, of common cause and identity, that was there in Central Park in 1968. Even before the show, the streets overflowed with wildly enthusiastic (some gentle, some not) revelers. From the start of the concert, it was clear that the audience and performers were part of a party in which all were included.

Although the occasional rudeness and drunken bullying of some of the concertgoers made it clear that this was no flower-power tribal gathering of the 60s, for the most part it drove home the possibility for community and celebration of life even on this side of the big chill. This was especially felt when The Dead played and sang "Touch of Grey," particularly significant because of Garcia's cosmetic aging but more importantly because of the reaffirmation of life and free choice on this side of his own wrestling match with death.

Dylan, The Dead and the other young and veteran combatants against conformism and the ugliness Ochs spoke about will survive Ollie North, Reagan and the days ahead. Thousands of voices said so when, for blocks around JFK, they could be heard to sing with Garcia The Dead's single encore:

*"It's even worse than it appears,  
but it's all right.  
I will get by. I will get by.  
I will get by. I will survive."*





Dead/Dylan — JFK

Bob Minkin

# NIGHT & DAY

by Cary Krosinsky

**N**IGHT and day. That's how far apart the Grateful Dead and Bob Dylan of 1987 are from their respective 1986 versions. There is a rejuvenated attitude and spirit which is reflected in the music performed. And when the two combined into one, they created a new, complete whole. The joining of the two was much like the giving of life to a newborn baby.

In 1986, the Dead and Dylan shared a number of large venues. While the Dead had mixed results at best, Dylan's performances, coupled with Tom Petty, were repetitive and lifeless. Also, immediately following the tour, Jerry's collapse threatened both his life and the life of the Dead.

The 1987 Dead/Dylan Alone & Together tour was, happily, a totally different story. Playing with the Dead has seemed to inject life and enthusiasm into Dylan. He sang with strength and vigor, and thrived on the attitude of not playing the same set twice the same way; of not choosing a song to play until it's time to play it. As a result, the combination of the two (Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead) can be called a solid success.

The format of these East Coast shows was ambitious. At JFK Stadium, in Philadelphia, the Dead played a fabulous 16 song 1st set which brought back memories of 1973. Enhancing the high quality of the music was the use of giant-screen video, one on each side of the stage, providing frequent close-ups of the musicians. For example, during the mid-song jam during "Cassidy" and the bridge between "China Cat Sunflower" and "I Know You Rider," one could closely observe Jerry in action. His glasses were poised at the tip of his nose, he was peering over at Bobby and Phil with an intense look while listening closely to the jam being improvised. It made the subsequent x-chemistry highs that much more telling. The video showed the hard work that

goes into the music, and verified the dedication of the band to the ideal of creating something new every time. Although the screens suffered from the heat and malfunctioned during the break, they made their point well.

The rest of the facilities at JFK, however, suffered not at all. The thought and organizational skills that went into preparing for the concert are to be highly commended. Showers and drinking water were readily available on the field. A multitude of vendors were walking through the grounds with ice cream and snow cones to help beat the heat (godsend, they were). It was quite amazing that a concert with over 70,000 people in attendance, in 90 degree humid weather, could be carried off so comfortably well. Even the police were friendly and helpful (pleasant surprise).

Thanks to the pleasant environs, the Dead's set was even more enjoyable than usual, not that any added incentive was needed. However, the classic-filled Dead set completed, it was time for the "together" part of the show. The visibly psyched Dylan's passionate singing combined nicely with the Dead's smoothly rhythmic backing for a quickly infectious result. Well-known classics such as "Tangled up in Blue," "Stuck Inside of Mobile," "Simple Twist of Fate," and "All Along the Watchtower" were particularly well received. Even songs that were unknown to the crowd such as "John Brown" and "Chimes of Freedom" were enjoyed and applauded. It was good to see a primarily Dead audience being open-minded and appreciative of the value of the new music being performed even though it was mostly unfamiliar to them. Other highlights included an impromptu "Got To Serve Somebody" and a well-chosen "Touch of Grey" encore. We will survive, and did so with flying colors. The stamina exhibited by the Dead, given the hot weather and playing on stage as they did for three and a half hours, was most impressive.

This staying power, however, would soon be tested further two days later at Giants Stadium.

The facilities at Giants Stadium certainly differed from JFK. Nothing was run well that Sunday in New Jersey. Unlike the crisp, stellar JFK sound, Giants Stadium provided muddled quality for anyone not on the field or sitting directly opposite the stage. Also, there were, believe it or not, ushers! This made for the first show in recent memory where friends with different tickets were forced to separate, and adjusting for poor sound was made impossible. As there has never been a problem without ushers, their presence was a major nuisance. I guess, being Sunday, they wanted to collect double pay. As if this wasn't enough, the food vending was woefully inadequate and the soda warm, making the oppressive weather more unbearable.

However, in this most unfitting cement venue, the music, as it usually does, prevailed. The show was to last for three sets and two encores making for the longest show in over ten years. If JFK reminded you of '73, this show was like a 1974 wall of sound spectacular. The Dead's first two sets were highlighted by a funky "West L.A.," a sing-along "Ramble on Rose," a "Bertha" that had to move, a stirring "Morning Dew," and a spacy "Playin'," all somehow overcoming the acoustic problems at hand.

After these two sets, considering the poor organization at Giants Stadium and the heat and humidity, everyone was drained, but somehow the Dead/Dylan combo played their longest and best set to date. They seemed to gel this night. Songs were well organized, fluid and ended crisply, which wasn't always the case in Philly (JFK's other excellent qualities notwithstanding). "Highway 61 Revisited" and "Baby Blue" were rousing. "Stuck Inside of Mobile" has been stuck inside my head ever since the show. The beautifully convincing song, "Joey," was not well received by the newspaper reviews in New York, but both versions witnessed showed that the critics' prejudices overcame their ability to listen. This is the perfect song for the Dead and Dylan to play together. Slowly paced, and written like a novel, it permits pretty harmonies and orchestration. Following the underrated "Joey" was an "All Along the Watchtower" which featured the hottest jamming of the combo to date, and the set closing "The Times They Are a Changin'" was fitting as they certainly are. The two encores extended the shows running time past five hours, satisfying and exhausting.

Those in attendance will remember these shows for a long time to come. Rumors have it that an album could result from this tour, and it would be most welcome. Tapes made in the audience will vary in quality since it was intended to be prohibited, but they should make their way through the grapevine quickly. They will point out what those who saw the shows already know. That being backed by the Dead creates the best possible scenario for Dylan. Certainly, this is a historically important combination. It was a thrill to be there. Hope you made it too. ■





Giants Stadium East Rutherford, New Jersey July 12, 1987

# Giants Stadium

by Jeff Tamarkin

IT'S hard for some Deadheads to imagine, but there is such a thing as a former Grateful Dead fan. When you're caught up in the madness, seeing every show on a tour, sometimes living from show to show and tour to tour, the idea that it might all stop some day (for you or them) is the furthest thing from the mind. But for some, it does eventually end. The Dead, while still drawing a large following of loyal old-timers, are essentially a young person's band — it takes stamina just to get to all the shows — and there are reasons for that. First and foremost, as most any Deadhead who was there in the late '60s and early '70s will tell you, they just ain't what they used to be (who among us is?!). Listen to a tape from the Fillmore East 1970, then a tape from 1986, and there's just no way a rational person can say the same spark of creativity and energy is still there.

So it was with some trepidation that this former Deadhead, who logged 100 shows between 1970-77, and only four or five since, went to catch the Dead and Dylan. The past few shows taken in (the last about five years ago) had been so depressing there didn't seem like any reason to ever go back. Garcia had become a shell of his once-incandescent self, and the others seemed to be dragging along as well. Still, the lure of this double-bill was too much to resist, even though Dylan's shows with Tom Petty last year were nothing less than dreadful.

Having heard *In The Dark*, and liking it more than any Dead album since *Terrapin Station*, helped in the enthusiasm department. These were good songs, played well. The Dead sounded like the Dead again, on record at least. And that was no mean trick for them after those last couple of studio turkeys and the lifeless live albums of the early '80s. Granted, it was no *Anthem* or *Workingman's*, but it was an improvement. Plus, all those rumors about Garcia regaining not only his health but his fervor within the band were growing in number; this had to be seen first-

hand to be believed.

Going to the stadium, two things came to mind. First, selling tie-dyes to Deadheads must be a very lucrative business. Back in the "old days," there was no "official" Dead uniform. Deadheads wore what they wanted. Some had tie-dyes, others just plain Dead t-shirts, others looked like they were on their way to law school. But there was more of a sense of originality back then, more hand-embroidered clothing, less of a standard "look." The second thing — which continued inside — is that there's a hell of a lot less getting stoned at Dead shows these days. Sure, there was a bit of smoke 'n' coke up in the second tier, but nothing like the days when seemingly every person in the room was tripped out and never without something to take on. Has the age of "just say no" hit Deadsville? (And with Jerry reportedly clean, will wonders never cease?!)

Oh, yeah, there was a third thing. You'd almost never know that this was a Bob Dylan show too. Out of the 71,000-plus attendees (a stadium record), it seemed like only a small percentage was there to see Dylan. And after the Dead's two opening sets, before they came back with old Jimmy, *thousands* actually walked out. Now, *that* was surprising. Wasn't Dylan once a cultural icon of the '60s himself? And what Deadhead wouldn't want to see them backing him? Plenty apparently didn't.

Come showtime, things got off to a rocking start. Bob Weir's "Hell In A Bucket" is the band's strongest new song in a dozen years, not to mention one of the bitterest put-down tunes since Dylan's own "Positively Fourth Street." It made a good opener. Garcia's "West L.A. Fadeaway," while hardly anything new and radically different, is a pleasant enough tune. But what was going on here? Were the Dead actually promoting an album for the first time in their lives?

Well, not really, though they did end up doing almost all of it. What was going on, unfortunately, was a typical slow-moving first Dead

set. Granted, Garcia was much perkier than he'd been before his illness — even throwing in a few Pete Townshend windmills — and the band was tighter and livelier ("Greatest Story Ever Told" — "an old one," said Weir — was pretty good) than tapes of a few years ago would indicate. But stringing together songs like "Loser," "Tons Of Steel," "Ramble On Rose," and Dylan's "When I Paint My Masterpiece" (strange choice considering the co-headliner, no? Even stranger that Weir sang it when Garcia used to with Merl Saunders) hardly made for momentum. By the time the first set had finally gotten some balls behind it, with the "Promised Land"/"Bertha" medley, it was over. Short songs, short set, even short tuning up! Was this the same Grateful Dead we used to know and love?

It didn't seem likely that the Dead would only play an hour by themselves and then do a set with Dylan, so it was encouraging when they came back without him for another set. Having looked over set lists from previous recent shows, this reviewer was hoping for a second set with some surprises. They'd been doing great old stuff like "Cumberland Blues," "Box Of Rain," "The Wheel," "Dupree's Diamond Blues" and "Cassidy" in recent sets, so anything was possible. And as much as the idea of Weir singing Pigpen's old tunes like "Lovelight" and "Midnight Hour" was somewhat nauseating to this veteran of the Pig years, there was still a curiosity to hear them. And then there were those weird covers they'd been doing: "Gimme Some Lovin'," "Hand Jive," "Get Back," "Mighty Quinn," "Dear Mr. Fantasy," "Little Red Rooster." Having never heard them play these songs, there was some high hopes that they'd knock off a couple. 'Twasn't to be.

Not that "Morning Dew" is bad news. That one they can do any time. But the jam that followed was almost predictable ("Playing In The Band," "The Other One," drums, etc.), even if it was played quite proficiently. The second set was more than passable by current Dead standards, and "Not Fade Away" especially sounded revived now that the Dead have reverted to the original Buddy Holly arrangement. But one little "Sittin' On Top Of The World" woulda made my night.

Following the exodus from the field (onto which thousands had jumped from the upper tiers while the promoter pleaded with them to go back up!), the band re-emerged with Dylan. Decker out in beatnik get-up, Dylan seemed to warm up to the Dead's style with no trouble at all (although it's rumored some Dead members were opposed to the tour). And it was obvious as well that he planned on sticking to his usual habits of scanning his entire career for material and then altering it radically.

More recent compositions like "Slow Train" and "Joey" co-existed beside predictable choices ("All Along The Watchtower," "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue" — a song the Dead have covered since they began — and "The Times They Are A-Changin'") and totally out-of-left-field shockers. The Dylan/Dead team worked wonders on "Chimes Of Freedom" and "Tomorrow Is A Long Time" (with Garcia on pedal steel for that one). And who would've ever expected to hear the likes of "Queen Jane Approximately," "Wicked Messenger" or "Stuck Inside Of Mobile With The Memphis Blues Again"?

All in all, the pairing of Dylan and Dead was a stroke of brilliance. Besides the fact that they're both '60s survivors, there are certain

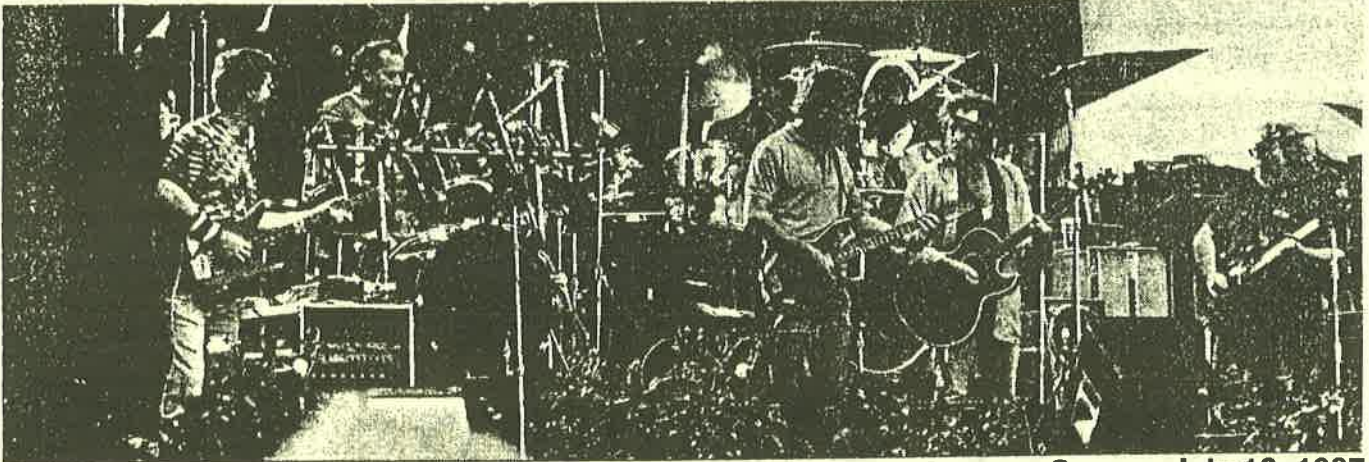
stylistic similarities that have begged to merge for years. Go back and check the lyrical references in, say, Dylan's *John Wesley Harding* album and it's not hard to imagine Robert Hunter having written some of those tunes. It's no wonder the Dead, and Garcia in particular, have covered Dylan's songs for decades now.

One has to wonder, then, if Garcia was so psyched about the prospect of finally playing behind Dylan for some length of time that he was moved to put some vitality back into his playing because of it, or if he really is going

through some sort of rejuvenation. Idol worship isn't limited to those in the audience, after all. But whatever it was that put the life back into the Dead this night (which ended with the Dead's "Touch of Grey" — kinda suits 'em anyway — and Dylan's always dirgeful "Knockin' On Heaven's Door"), it was gratifying to see and hear. Whether it lasts after the tour, or even after that gig (which some say was the best on the tour) will be for others to decide.

If the Dead's shows are no longer so much peaks and valleys as they were years ago, that

is if they must be consistent at a certain level, then this present level is surely preferable to that of a few years back. They know it, the fans know it. And all probably know that if they slip backwards again, it'll be time to call it a day. From the standpoint of late 1987, that possibility looks further off than it did not very long ago, and that's gotta be good news. For at least one ex-Deadhead, this new show of strength won't mean going to every gig again, but neither will it mean ruling them out the next time they're in town. ■



Autzen Stadium Eugene, Oregon July 19, 1987

# EUGENE

by Mike Heffley

"If the fool will become wise, let him persist in his folly."

—(who said that?)

"Old hippies never die, they just go to Eugene."

—Stephen Gaskin, among plenty of others

I've known for weeks that I'd open my report of the Dylan/Dead appearance in Eugene, Oregon, with those quotes. They both rattled around in my head as I mused over every angle of the event, before, during, and after.

I felt myself to be the perfect match, audience-wise, for these guys who have been defined to death as old hippies living on borrowed time, as fools and as wise men too. I moved to Eugene just as the 70s began, from the Bay Area where I was born, definitely feeling, at age 22, like an old hippie, fried from five long years of spinning my wheels. Didn't expect to be here this long; didn't expect the folly of staying to lead to the wisdom it did.

The Dead are no strangers to Eugene. They're all more or less family with the Kesey's and others around here, and have played several times over the years together and in their side groups: a couple of times at the new world class Hult Center, once at the Oregon Country Fair, once (Kingfish) at the ever-scuffling hippy hall that refuses to die, the W.O.W. (Woodsmen of the World) Hall, where the wobbles used to meet in the 30s. Seeing them come to town in such force, now, in the eye of their current whirlwind of success (they filled the local University of Oregon's Autzen Stadium with 40,000 — about a third of the population here) warmed a lot of hearts.

Downright heated the local economy, too: five million dollars (and no small amount of tie-dyes and other handicrafts sold by the loose bazaar that comes together around the Dead) got left behind in local restaurants and

lodgings — more than the stadium's football crowds bring. This in one of the most depressed counties in one of the most depressingly polarized economies in recent American history. The local officials didn't expect too much trouble and tried to make things easy — an ordinance was waived to provide camping in a nearby park, and University people chipped in some of their space — and were obviously pleasantly surprised at the gentle, constructive spirit of the gypsy city both at rest and play. Uncle John, having taken his children home, was taking them out on the road with him now, to everybody else's home, showering a bit of prosperity as well as joy. Maybe we all ought to hit the road; maybe we'll have no choice someday. Get America Moving, indeed.

I got the distinct impression both Dylan and the Dead were playing to Eugene in a consciously relaxed way. It was the fourth stop on a six city tour which would end in San Francisco and L.A. The set list was a string of all their most strongly familiar classics, tunes stamped deep already on everyone, all delivered with distinctly marshalled energy. Which isn't to say it wasn't a tight and interesting show . . . just more of a "strengthening of the things that remain" than a "strike another match, go start anew."

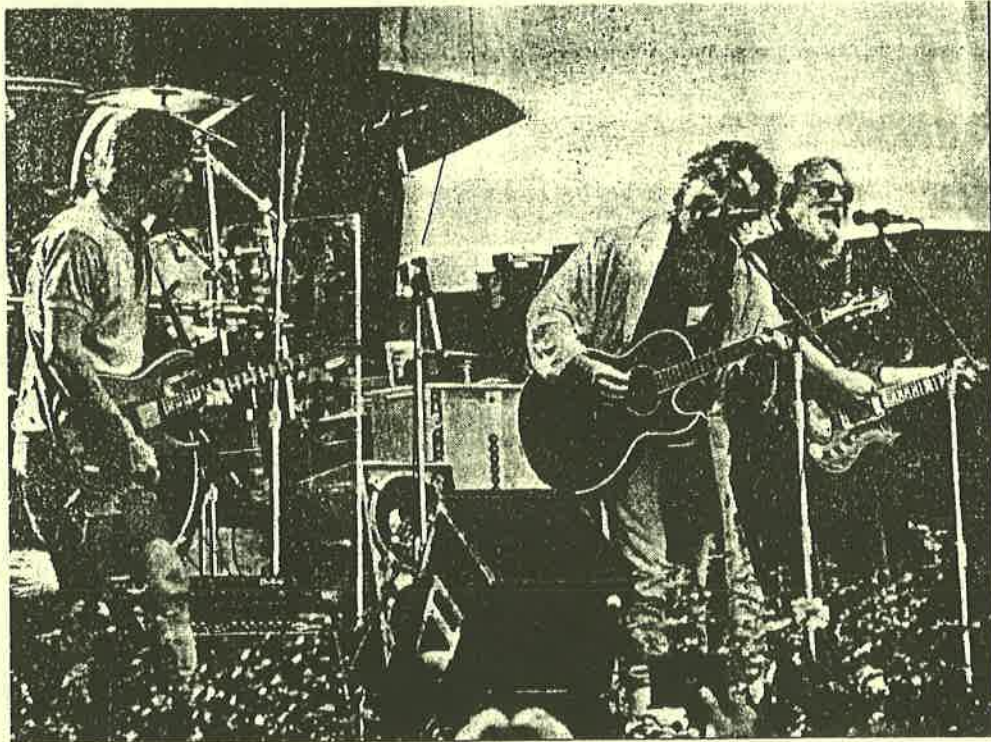
Given that, I also sensed a targeting of the younger generation, in the way they restated all their most familiar songs so simply and clearly, with such an assured and unforced passion. There were a lot of kids there, inside and out in the makeshift market crowd, around my fourteen-year-old daughter's age. They were definitely relating to it as an event of their media rather than one of their old hippie parents'. Kids I had seen be conscientiously wavy, or heavy metal, or whatever else Top 40 culture hyped them into being, were donning the tie-dyes and trinkets and general spirit and con-

cerns associated with these artists. The event was as hyped by the local Top 40 stations as a concert by Madonna might have been. And I was grateful for that, as a parent, for seeing commercialism turned to that end. I watched my daughter get into the trappings of hippiedom and this particular music in a way that reminded me of my own first love with it all — "The people were all so interesting, everything was so colorful and beautiful, everyone was so nice, I felt like I could just relax and be myself;" and I felt so much happier than if she'd come home raving about the work and spirit and concerns of just about any other pop artists who attract adolescent attention that I could think of. She saw the skywriter that left a peace symbol over the Sgt. Pepper album played during the break, and an "Impeach Reagan" over the Dead strains of "He's Gone," both in synchronistic coincidence. The torch had been passed for me without me lifting a finger.

The weather was perfect, after two days of record rainfall that drenched the campers and cast its shadow over the concert. Such a shift itself seemed to prime us all up for the best of times. The sound system was good enough to hear words clearly, to join the heartbeat with the bottoms and the brain to the highs of the spectrum in comfort and style. The mood, subdued and slyly hot to match the weather, was set with a recording of Eugene's latest success story, Robert Cray, as people filed in. The Dead came onstage, and the race was on.

I almost thought Bob Weir might be Dylan for awhile there. I was far away, and he looked and moved like the guy, sounded more like him than I've ever heard, especially on "Feel Like a Stranger" and "When I Paint My Masterpiece." Been some serious vocal influences going down between those two.

Garcia was in spangling form; Brent Mydland lent some tasty suggestions of jazz and modern sound synthesis to the usual Dead



Jay Blakesberg

Dylan joins the Dead in Eugene

jams, as well as a big dose of beautiful organ work throughout; Kreutzmann and Hart showed how much easier a drummer's job can be when shared; and Phil Lesh milked the bottom of that good sound for all it was worth, with obvious relish.

Now here's what you'll probably hear everyone say about the Dylan-Dead connection, one way or another. At this point in time, it's like watching the irresistible force meet the immovable object (who is which is up for grabs). It's like watching the Dead's X-factor, or seventh member, walk on and join them in human form. It's like watching things that Dylan suggests between his lines — the beauty he expresses in his ugliness, the perfection in his imperfection — jump into print to become lines in their own right. There's a real strong, stable energy going on there, on all the levels.

I've always been more the Dylan freak than the Deadhead: more ahead of than behind the beat, more focused than spaced, more the lone wolf than the family/community member, more the restless seeker than keeper of the flame — even when all those things were the less desirable. But Dylan and Dead freaks alike are equidistant from the point of this merger: Dylan's energy acts like a magnifying glass gathering the rays of the Dead's sun to start an instant fire in the grass on the more upbeat grooves, like "Maggie's Farm," "Highway 61 Revisited," and "Tangled Up in Blue"; the Dead's mellow balladeering and bluesy honkytonk laces and twines itself around Dylan's slower, prettier or looser tunes — "Simple Twist of Fate," "Watching the River Flow," "Rainy Day Women," and other similar grooves.

Some high points: after the opening "Maggie's Farm," Dylan went right into "Dead Man," a choice I had thought would be the hippest, and had hoped he'd make; "The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest" was a real C&W cooker, a real bardic talker, something proba-

bly only these guys could even conceive, much less pull off, Dylan breaking his rap into song so passionately at the end, like Homer might have done in ancient Greece: the Dead played "Stuck Inside of Mobile with the Memphis Blues Again" with a rocking little riff reminiscent of "Day Tripper" (and I suspected Dylan might have been playing with some of the words on that and others, but I could only distinguish those I already knew: a real sound problem, in this situation, if he was doing so).

But enough sketchy attempts at blow-by-blow descriptions of the essentially indescribable (musical/poetic catharsis). This forum is eminently more suited to exploring context than content.

"It was twenty years ago today . . ." sang the Beatles in the break, and their words were charged with a meaning that turned them into a time capsule being opened. Everyone is aware that this is the year of the 20th anniversary of the Summer of Love.

I had to sit still on my seat for awhile, even when I felt like moving around and circling in for that ever-better view, in order to get this one: Dylan and the Dead and their audiences as would-be dragonslayers (whether we're wise Saint Georges or foolish Don Quixotes depends, perhaps, on how long we've persisted in this folly). In the fray we've managed to get on the dragon's back, and now we're riding it. Swords still in hand, we're much closer than before to the soft spot that has to be hit; we're also hanging on for dear life as much as trying to hit it.

Unlike many riding that beast so skillfully and with such panache, these guys still don't strike me as ones who would rue such a fall. They might even bring it about.

*(Mike Heffley is a free-lance jazz singer/songwriter/trombonist. His name is also familiar in the Northwest for his music journalism in Eugene's & Portland's dailies, magazines and other publications.)* ■



## A Vinyl Collaboration

by John Grady

**F**OURTH of July, 1987 and the Grateful Dead are in the midst of a hot, two-hour set in Foxboro, Mass. Jerry Garcia leads a fiery version of "Wharf Rat." A stadium-sized sing-along accompanies "Uncle John's Band."

Cheers rise as a helicopter, coming in for a landing, circles the outdoor arena. Bob Dylan is about to join the band for the first of a six-show collaboration.

These two-and-a-half decade survivors of the country's cultural shifts, much of which they helped induce themselves, were about to perform together at last.

Dylan's coarse, but highly expressive voice, at first defiant and challenging, worked its way through the crowd. The concert built to a climax of cheers surrounding Garcia's heroic guitar crescendos on "All Along the Watchtower."

The premier meeting of these music champions was a smooth fit. The Dead, recognized as one of rock's strongest instrumental outfits, have a respect for Dylan as one of the greatest songwriters. They offered him their full power.

The two acts' common roots in American musical traditions of folk, blues, country and

rock create a familiar, yet fresh, musical vision.

Together, Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead synthesize a new sound. Each adds to the other. Combining, between them, 50 years of musical expression. This is a musical fusion now captured on a CBS live-concert album which will continue to challenge and inspire new listeners — as well as longtime fans.

Aptly titled *Dylan & The Dead*, the record combines the lightning flash and fluid drive of the Dead with the lyric passion and dark intensity of Dylan.

The new live recording distills the best of the six shows they played together in July, 1987 into a relatively brief, but tasty — and very deep — 45 minutes of music. It's a Bob Dylan album, certainly, but it is, unmistakably, also the Dead's.

The tunes are mostly low-keyed and folk-flavored. Dylan's incisive lyrics are delivered with all the subtlety — but driving — power the Dead can muster. They give Dylan all the room and backup he needs to deliver his messages.

The poetic and confrontational story-tunes, "Slow Train," "Gotta Serve Somebody," "Joey" and "Queen Jane Approximately" are enhanced by the Dead's treatment. Vocal harmonies by Dead members on

all the choruses make these songs sound different and new.

"All Along the Watchtower" and "Knockin' on Heaven's Door," which had already worked their way into the Dead's playlist before these joint concerts, rock to high heaven.

A sprightly version of "I Want You" rounds out the album's seven selections with a touch of fun.

Strumming a white, hollow-bodied, cut-away guitar, Dylan took his place at the center of the Foxboro stage while the band set up around him. Wearing a silver coat, a black leather vest and a black beret, the New York poet stood in stark contrast to the colorful, shorts-and-running-shoes casualness of California's most well-known band.

Many Deadheads wondered, seeing Dylan's face projected on the massive video-replay screen behind him, about this legendary singer's place in their favorite band. But as Dylan began and the Dead joined in on the soft and familiar strains of "The Times They Are A-Changin,'" it kicked off a stirring display of musical muscle that challenged — and then scored repeated points with — the record-setting number of fans in the football stadium.

Brent Mydland wrapped subtle keyboard notes around Dylan's rhythm guitar sound.

Phil Lesh bounced the beat on his bass. Mickey Hart and Bill Kreutzmann, working as an intuitive unit, flipped and sparked shuffling dynamics on the various drums and cymbals. Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir picked some telling notes and chords on their guitars.

Against this sound, which can now be heard on the album, Dylan growled out his always-provocative lines: "Man's ego's inflated, you know his laws are outdated. . ."

The band joined in on the chorus: "There's a sloow, there's a sloow, there's a slow train comin." And Garcia stepped back to rip his own version of the melody right out of the tune's middle.

As the album's cover art by Rick Griffin indicates, these two musical heavyweights are like "headlights" on the relentless and lengthy train of American music.

Griffin, masterful San Francisco artist and iconmaker of the surf and psychedelic eras, gives Dylan's shades the Dead's 13-point lightning bolts. The familiar Dead skeleton, in this new work, gets a harmonica in a holder. And the musicians' train gets its wings.

These guys started "riding that train" a long time ago.

Bob Dylan was inspired by the rail-riding, Dust Bowl trappings of the courageous minstrel Woody Guthrie. The Grateful Dead's origins can be traced back to the beat, 1940s switchman nights of Neal Cassady and Jack Kerouac's "railroad earth."

They've been driving the locomotive (or partying in the caboose) of the massive American music train ever since they first slipped on as scuffling, bad-boy youngsters.

Theirs may be a slow train, but it ain't stopping.

And, looking at what the last couple of years have produced for these artists, it may finally be speeding up. Both of them are finding new peaks in popularity and creativity.

For Bob Dylan, his *Down in the Groove* album, released in 1988, that features two songs co-written with Grateful Dead lyricist,

Robert Hunter has brought him more critical and commercial success.

A survivor, like the Dead, of the cultural wars and upheaval he helped create in the 1960s, *Down in The Groove* confronts, and resolves, issues of death.

Covering country ballads like "Ninety Miles an Hour (Down a Dead End Street)" and "Rank Strangers To Me," Dylan evokes his chilling vision of death's dread. On his own original tune, "Death is Not the End," (With Mark Knopfler on guitar and reggae rhythm greats Robbie Shakespeare, bass and Sly Dunbar on drums) the artist offers hope amid his honest despair.

On the brilliant Hunter-Dylan composition, "Silvio," Dylan sings a wry summation of the edges he walks in his poetic work. The tune opens up, appropriately: "Stake my future on a hell of a past/ Looks like the future is a-comin' on fast."

As Jerry Garcia, Bob Weir and Brent Mydland sing backup vocals, Dylan runs down his story. Among the things he can do: "I can stroke your body to relieve your pain/ charm the whistle off an evening train."

Confronting death is always part of it, but in this tune there's less of a threat: "Silvio, I gotta go/ find out something only dead men know."

It is the album's other collaboration with Hunter, "The Ugliest Girl in the World," that really lightens up this album. He romps through his hopeless fascination with this woman with a "five inch smile."

The full range of Dylan's capabilities are displayed on *Down in the Groove*, from his hot rocker "Had a Dream About You Baby," with Eric Clapton on guitar and Ron Wood on bass, to his version of the traditional folk song "Shenandoah" done in Dylan's deepest Nashville voice.

Another recent Dylan collaboration, the *Traveling Wilburys*, in which he works with Roy Orbison, George Harrison, Tom Petty and Jeff Lynne, was shipped at the number three spot on the charts and, at last check, was about to take over the number one spot.

While this recording project has taken on

a serious tone because of Roy Orbison's sudden death of a heart attack on Dec. 6, 1988, it was conceived as low-budget, low-pressure enjoyable music-making between these accomplished friends and musical colleagues.

Despite its tongue-in-cheek attitude, *Traveling Wilburys* offers some of the freshest and most honest-sounding music that's been heard lately. Orbison's vocals on "Not Alone Any More" make this a truly great song. Harrison's lead on "Handle With Care" has "hit" written all over it.

Dylan's work on this album absolutely uncovers his wacky sense of humor. As he draws on the tune "Dirty World," "You don't need no wax job, you're smooth enough for me." The "visionary poet" then proceeds to offer this object of his affection a "free oil change" and more.

On "Tweeter and the Monkey Man" he rambles through one of his familiar, intricate mini-movie tunes based on the relationship of these two characters set in New Jersey. "It was out on Thunder Road when they crashed into Paradise. . ." goes one of the lines.

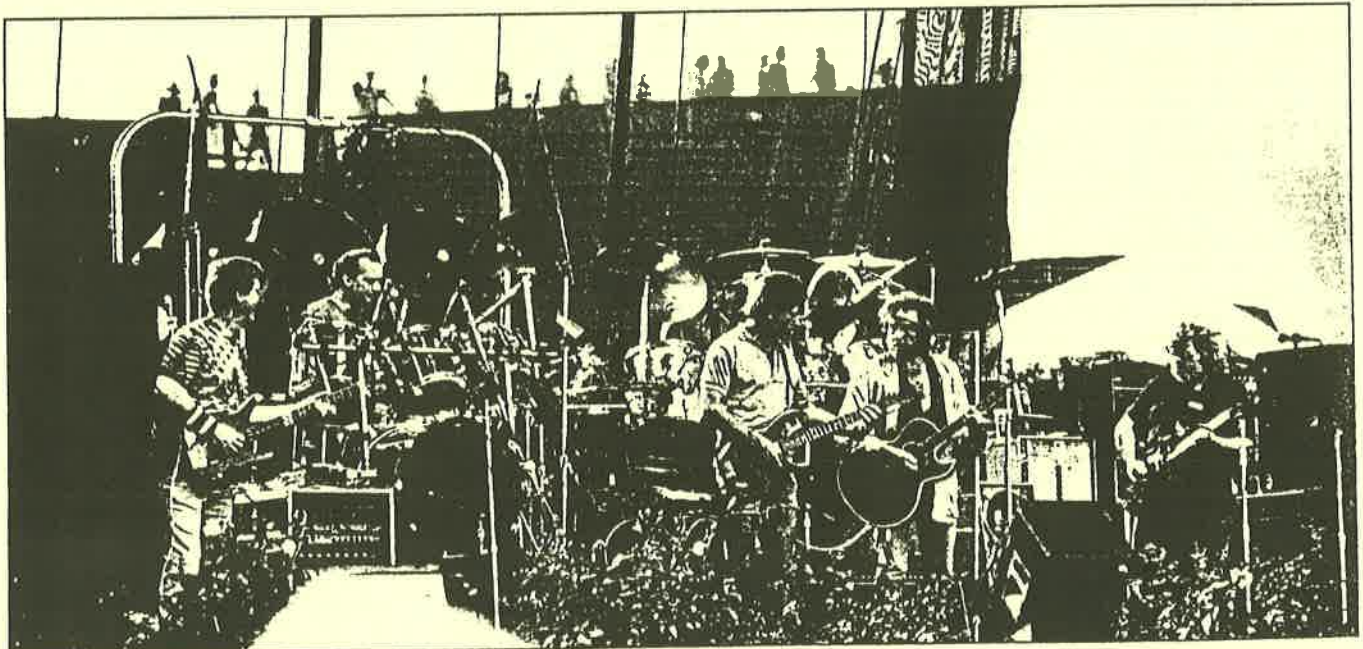
On "Congratulations," Dylan offers a frisky version of his traditional "put-down" songs. "Congratulations, for making me wait/ Congratulations, now it's too late."

*Traveling Wilburys* is country-flavored party music. The surf-stomp "Margarita," with its catalogue of styles and images, for example, ably mixes the talents of all five of these superstars.

And in still another collaboration, Dylan appeared last year on a special recording project, *Folkways Tribute to Woody Guthrie and Leadbelly*, that also appeared on PBS television.

More than a dozen major artists contributed to this benefit project that enabled the Smithsonian to purchase the entire Folkways collection, and thus preserve and make available the priceless musical heritage of artists such as Guthrie and Leadbelly.

The liner notes include comments from Bob Dylan about Guthrie: "He had a sound



Autzen Stadium — Eugene, OR

... and he had something that needed to be said. . . I started learning his songs. I mean there was a time when I did nothing but his songs. And I read his book. . . I thought *Bound For Glory* was the first *On The Road*, and of course it changed my life like it changed everyone else's. . . For me he was a link in a chain. Like I am for some other people, and we all are for somebody. We're all just links in a chain."

Dylan performs the classic Guthrie tune "Pretty Boy Floyd" on the benefit album, alone with his guitar, in his dustiest, mid-west twang. The all Guthrie-Leadbelly material is given fresh interpretations by such diverse and talented artists as Arlo Guthrie, Pete Seeger, U2, Bruce Springsteen, Sweet Honey in the Rock, Little Richard, Brian Wilson, Emmylou Harris, Willie Nelson and John Mellencamp.

Amid all this collaboration, Dylan took last summer for an 80-date tour that critics called "a Bob Dylan dream concert." Featuring a stripped-down backup crew led by guitarist G. E. Smith (with no backup singers or even an organ), Dylan presented a "Biograph" show, featuring selections from his full, 25-year career. Each of these shows included a solo acoustic set by Dylan.

Plans are in the works for a European tour this summer, according to Dylan's publicist.

The Grateful Dead saw continuing success for *In The Dark*, their chart-topping 1987 album. And the band proceeded to break Madison Square Garden attendance records, selling out nine New York shows in a row. Announcing a commitment to help save the world's endangered rainforests, the Dead raised \$500,000 in a benefit at the final one of these shows.

Long eschewing any overt political involvement, the Grateful Dead finally chose the threat to the rainforests as the one to rally their energy around. Because it is a problem that threatens the very life of the planet, it is one that all types of people can comfortably work together on.

Now more popular than ever, a new Grateful Dead album, currently in the works, is eagerly awaited by their legions of old and new fans. It is expected to be released this summer.

Among the songs, which have already been heard in concert, being considered for the new album are "Victim or the Crime" by Bob Weir and Garrett Graham; "Gentlemen, Start Your Engines," "I Will Take You Home" and "Blow Away" by Brent Mydland and lyricist John Barlow and "Believe It Or Not" by Jerry Garcia and Robert Hunter.

For now, Deadheads must be satisfied with this new Dylan/Dead collaboration.

Crowd sounds are heard only between tracks, completely disappearing in this studio-quality recording. Producers John Cutler and Jerry Garcia have obviously enhanced the mix with sparkling instrumentals working well around Dylan's harsh vocals. Notable in the mix is Mydland's keyboard work, suggesting the successful sound Dylan achieved with keyboardist Al Cooper on the 1966 masterpiece, *Blonde on Blonde*.

The disappointment of *Dylan & the Dead* is, given the wealth of material that was recorded at the six shows (three on the East Coast: Foxboro, Mass. 7/4; JFK, Philadelphia 7/10; Giants Stadium, N.J. 7/12 and three on the West Coast: Autzen Stadium,



Jay Blakesberg

Dylan with the Dead in Oakland

Eugene, Oreg. 7/19; Oakland Stadium, 7/24 and Anaheim Stadium 7/26) very little of it appears here. There are only seven tunes on the album, while their sets together averaged 13 songs. Since all the shows were different, they could easily have filled a double album with quality music.

For instance, at the Foxboro show Dylan launched into a harmonica break that added a lively dimension to that rocking tune. But there is no example of Dylan playing his trademark instrument on *Dylan & the Dead*.

At Foxboro, and two other dates, Garcia wowed the crowd by playing pedal steel on the Dylan crooner, "I'll Be Your Baby Tonight." This song, and any pedal steel, are absent from the new album.

At a number of the dates, Dylan joined the Dead in singing the "we will survive" sentiments of the Dead's tune "Touch of Grey" near the close of the shows. But there are only Dylan compositions on *Dylan & the Dead*.

Among the many classic songs Dylan and the Dead performed together that were not included on the album were, "Memphis Blues," "Simple Twist of Fate," "Highway 61 Revisited," "Ballad of a Thin Man," "Tangled Up in Blue," "Rainy Day Women 12 & 35," along with about a dozen more.

In the summer of 1986, the Grateful Dead shared some stadium dates with Bob Dylan who was touring at that time with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers backing him up. In addition to their work together, Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers would perform their own set and Dylan would also perform his own, solo acoustic set.

Dylan's cutting vocals, and his guitar and harmonica playing, fit in nicely with the Heartbreakers' slicing rock sound. Joined by four stunning women singing gospel-style harmonies, Dylan performed songs from his 1986 *Empire Burlesque* album such as "Clean Cut Kid," "Trust Yourself" and "Seeing The Real You At Last."

Alone on stage, Dylan blew his harmonica and confronted his audience with lines like "the pellets of poison are flooding our rivers" from the 1962 song "Masters of War."

It was during this 1986 tour that Dylan first performed a few dates with the Grateful Dead. During the last show of the tour in

Washington, D.C. (just prior to Garcia's collapse due to a diabetic coma), Dylan sang a memorable version of "Desolation Row" on stage with the Dead.

Early in 1987, Dylan visited the Dead at their San Rafael studio to begin rehearsals for the summer tour that would ultimately result in the new *Dylan & The Dead* album.

The meeting of these two musical forces was a long time coming.

"Dylan affected the Dead the same way he affected everybody," says Dennis McNally, the Grateful Dead's publicist. "One of the fundamental reasons that Jerry Garcia could take rock music seriously was because Dylan made rock 'n' roll lyrics capable of having substance."

It was in 1961 that the former Robert Zimmerman from Hibbing, Minnesota, rambled into New York City, meeting and playing with the likes of Dave Van Ronk, Ramblin' Jack Elliot, Phil Ochs, Judy Collins, Pete Seeger, Tom Paxton and others. He visited his hero Woody Guthrie, who was hospitalized in nearby New Jersey, and played him Guthrie songs as well as his own new tunes.

Dylan wrote about the "luckless, the abandoned an' forsaken" as he put it in "Chimes of Freedom" and he dove into political controversy by condemning racism and nuclear war in his music.

As Peter, Paul and Mary's version of his anthemic indictment of American society, "Blowin' in the Wind" rose on the charts, Dylan-mania swept the country. But Dylan never pandered to his audience, he always upset the status quo. Even in 1963, as he accepted the Tom Paine Award from the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, he shocked the audience by saying he could see something of himself in John F. Kennedy's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald. It wouldn't be the last time he was booted.

Always an honest artist, Dylan challenged himself, as well as his audience. By 1965, he was re-inventing himself. He worked hard to free his mind from all its creative inhibitions.

"On the slow train time does not interfere & at the Arabian crossing waits White Heap, the man from the newspaper & behind him the hundred Inevitables made of solid rock

and stone — the Cream Judge & the Clown — the doll house where Savage Rose & Fixable live simply in their wild animal luxury. . . ." wrote Bob Dylan on the liner notes to his 1965 album *Highway 61 Revisited*.

Meanwhile, in San Francisco, an electric jug band called the Warlocks was evolving into the Grateful Dead.

As Dylan was testing his folk music audience with a shocking rock 'n' roll set at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival appearance with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, the Grateful Dead, on the other side of the continent, were conducting some tests of their own.

The Acid Tests of the mid-sixties in San Francisco were the visible reflection of the mind-expanding changes the nation — and the world — were undergoing at the time. Civil rights, Vietnam, equality of the sexes, free love, radicals militants, ecologists and more were tearing down the accepted norms of American society.

While Dylan lashed out and attacked all the phonies he saw around him, *For them that must obey authority/ That they do not respect in any degree/ who despise their jobs, their destinies/ Speak jealously of them that are free. . .* "It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)," the Grateful Dead were celebrating the creation of a new, alternative way of life. *Shall we go, you and I, while we can, through the transitive nightfall of diamonds . . .* "Dark Star."

On the surface, the Grateful Dead and Bob Dylan seem like an unlikely combination: Dylan — a dark and abrasive cynic; the Dead — rainbow bright and hopeful. But they are two sides of the same coin. Both have many facets.

What they have in common is a love of music and poetry. They want to reach people with their art, not to lead, but to share visions.

Growing up in America, these musicians embraced the homegrown ideals of the cowboy, the rebel, the outlaw — Dylan's Joker and the Thief or the Dead's Cassidy and Jack Straw.

Inspired by the barrier-smashing writing of Jack Kerouac, who himself was inspired by the long, poetic traditions of artists and visionaries such as Arthur Rimbaud, Vincent Van Gogh or James Joyce, Dylan and the Dead explored their own new, artistic territories.

Emphasizing honesty, love, surprise and the removal of all personal and artistic obstacles to the spiritual goals of true, self-realization, these artists attracted an instant audience.

Joining voices together on stage, Dylan and the Dead find common ground, celebrating not what you need, but what you want. on tunes like, "I Want You": *Now all my fathers, they've gone down/ True love they've been without it/ But all their daughters put me down/ 'Cause I don't think about it.*

Because the Dead/Dylan audience expects them to change and grow, the two have maintained a mutually beneficial relationship.

*Dylan & The Dead* is not a nostalgic, Monkees reunion. These tunes — and their messages — are just as fresh today as when they were written. The proof can be found sitting in the bleachers of the massive stadiums they fill; many in the audience weren't even born in 1967, when both Dylan

and the Dead hit their first peaks. New fans are still being attracted by what the artists are saying.

As they sing on the new album's version of the 1965 tune, "Queen Jane Approximately":

*You're tired of yourself and all your creations*

*Won't you come see me Queen Jane. . .*

Both Dylan and the Dead enjoy spontaneous, heartfelt music. And they both have a long history of collaborations, so their coming together was only natural.

From his appearance with the Butterfield Blues Band in Newport, through his long, fruitful association with The Band, to 1975's Rolling Thunder tour that collected a roving band of troubadours, including his longtime cohort Joan Baez, along with other figures like Roger McGuinn, Allen Ginsberg and Joni Mitchell, Dylan has worked on stage with a long list of people.

The Grateful Dead have appeared with an equally long list, from Carlos Santana, to the Neville Brothers to last fall's guest appearances by Suzanne Vega and Darryl Hall and John Oates at Madison Square Garden.

Music is the driving force that brings these folks, and their ever-expanding audiences, together.

Hard to pin down, both difficult and feisty attractions, Bob Dylan and the Grateful Dead came together, finally, in the summer of 1987. A slice of that artistic combination is now available on vinyl. It deserves, and stands up to, repeated listenings. Something fresh here always seems to jump out at you. ■



#### BOB DYLAN AND THE GRATEFUL DEAD

*Dylan & The Dead (CBS LP/ Cassette/CD)*

THIS COULD be a marriage made in heaven or hell, depending on which side of the of the critical fence you might be sitting. The majority of those who pass Garcia's gang off as dead meat have probably never heard a Grateful Dead record, or been to a Grateful Dead concert in their lives. Usually, the name alone will be enough to cause the lip to curl ceilingwards and that terrible word "Hippiesss!" to hiss from clenched teeth.

Dylan has more street cred because he is a poet and therefore a 'serious' writer. His songs, we are endlessly told, have affected countless generations and influenced many more to pick up guitars and croon seriously for their supper. Dylan is also responsible for such legendary statements as 'Blonde On Blonde', 'Highway 61 Revisited', 'The Basement Tapes', 'Blood On The Tracks', 'John Wesley Harding' etc.

What you never get to hear, however, is that he was also the blurred brain behind such bunk as 'Self Portrait', 'Desire' and the majority of his more recent visits to the recording studio. That Dylan is a major talent there can be no doubt. . . . but recently?

Meanwhile The Grateful Dead are enjoying a major resurgence in popularity. Their 'In The Dark' comeback album of 1987

*Dylan and Dead (CBS 463381-1)*

After fifteen years' worth of wait, in one season when big reunions and unexpected collaborations took place, Bob DYLAN's U.S. tour with Tom Petty (ubiquitous and versatile minstrel) and the GRATEFUL DEAD went almost unnoticed by critics and by the press. Since 1972, when the earliest sessions occurred between America's greatest band and greatest songwriter, through 1987 much has changed in the spirit which breathed through their works. And it is Dylan's exhausted voice which does not bear comparison with the lively musicality of the DEAD, whose only trace of aging is GARCIA's beard turned grey. Oddly enough, the album is a single one, which may be due to marketing reasons, and it makes a welcome entrance in our collections (the only puzzling question being whether should it be filed under 'D' or 'G' . . .) Repeated tossings of the disc over the turntable confirm our expectations to listen to a G.D. album of Dylan covers sung by the author himself.

'Slow Train' 'Gotta serve somebody' 'I want you' 'Queen Jane Approximately' 'Joey', 'All along the watchtower', 'Knockin' on heaven's door', neither one of which lasts less than four minutes. 'Joey' (5'10") is definitely the cat-in-hole flower of the album possibly along with the non-Hendrix-styled version of DYLAN and BAND'S 'All along the watchtower'. The hole-worthy cover is by Rick GRIFFIN: one final suggestion: file it under 'D' (such as DEAD).

RICCARDO PENNA

Spiral Light

rewarded them with both a new lease of life and a brand new, younger audience. The Dead have trimmed their sound to suit the new technology of the '80s and, apart from the occasional flawed song, they sound better than ever.

Part of their return to full strength was to play a series of concerts with Dylan, of which this is the recorded result. When the 'writer' and the 'hippies' meet on stage the two pieces fit together perfectly! Dylan returns to his 'Blonde On Blonde' swagger while the Dead give him the best backing sound he's had since The Band were behind him.

Old chestnuts such as 'Queen Jane Approximately' and 'All Along The Watchtower' take on a revived vitality and a lungful of fresh clean air, the former featuring a totally breathtaking guitar solo from Garcia. Equally impressive, albeit less energetic, is the combination's reworking of 'Knocking On Heaven's Door' which, while retaining all the strength of the recorded original, sounds also like some long-lost treasure that never quite made it to the Dead's 'American Beauty' album.

Lushly played and perfectly paced it is the perfect ending to what, after all, sounds like a perfect match. "There's nothing like a Dylan and Grateful Dead concert!" will have to be the new clarion call for Deadheads after this. (8)

NME

Edwin Pouncey



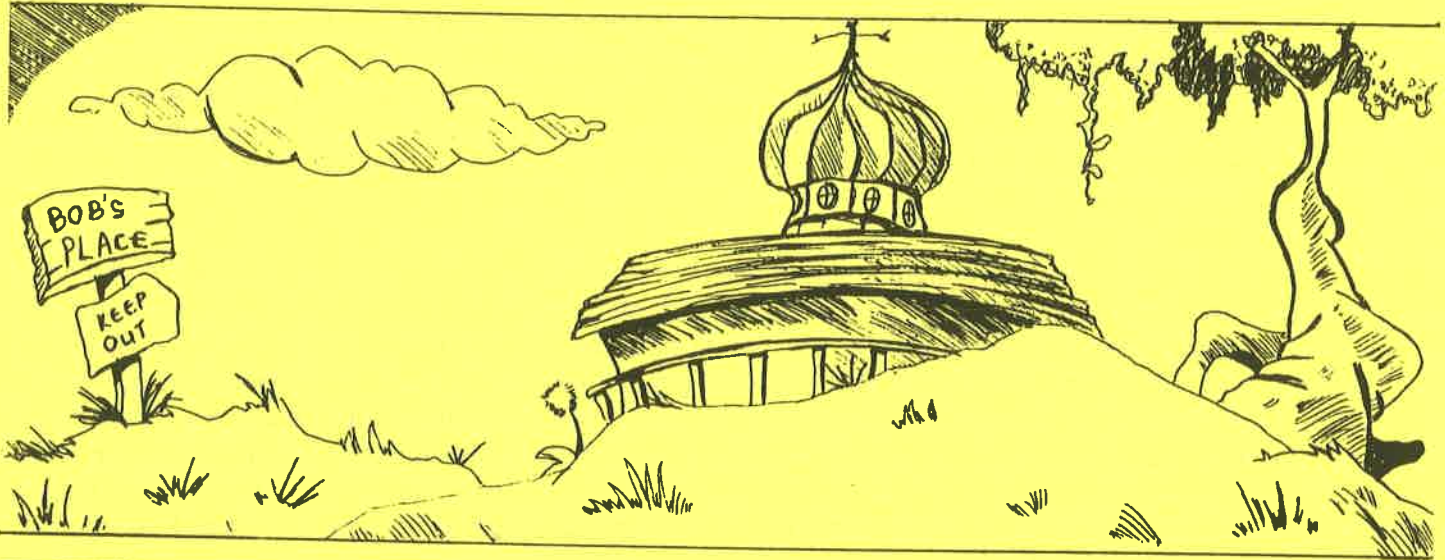
*Where I'm bound, I can't tell...*



# the MALIBU MONTHLY

MARK CARTER

WELCOME TO MALIBU, WHERE THE SUN ALWAYS SHINES.....



..... BOB ARRIVES AT HEATHROW AT THE START OF HIS LONDON RESIDENCY.....

MR. DYLAN, ANY CHANCE OF AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW?

YEP!



GREAT! WHEN CAN WE BEGIN IT?

WHAT?! YOU JUST HAD IT!



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**BOB DYLAN - OSAKA CASTLE HALL, JAPAN. 6th March 1986.**

**By John Potter.**

Springlike weather came to this part of Japan for the first time on Thursday and it coincided with Dylan's visit to Osaka, the second stop on his four concert tour of Japan. This was the first time that he had been here since the 1978 tour when the Budokan double album was made. His long absence from this country ensured that - in Osaka anyway - British and Americans converged on Osaka Castle Hall in considerable numbers, not wanting to miss the opportunity to see the great man. In fact I was surprised at just how many 'gaijins' (the Japanese term for Westerners) the show had attracted. Standing on the platform waiting for my train back to Kobe after the show, the number of gaijins seemed almost equal to the amount of Japanese faces. A common bond seemed to have brought us together and the atmosphere was not much different from my experience at Wembley, or Earl's Court or Blackbushe.

The overwhelming majority at the show itself were of course Japanese however, and it was interesting to look around at the variety of faces, styles and ages. Rock concerts in Japan always seem to attract a wider age range and are not exclusively the province of youth as they often are in the West. At the Dylan gig, for example, I saw Japanese schoolchildren, businessmen in suits, several couples in their forties and fifties, and a sprinkling of teenage Japanese punks, many of them clutching copies of the tour booklet. The Japanese, in fact, love souvenirs and a brisk trade was going on outside the concert hall where Dylan badges, stickers, key rings and towels were being snapped up. (And I swear I heard one young Japanese asking where he could buy a Dylan hot dog).

Many - if not most - of the Japanese would not have understood much of Dylan's words as the average Japanese has a poor command of English and the songs are not exactly easy to follow even for native speakers. My two Japanese companions at the show admitted to me that they understood little or nothing of what he was singing "except for **Blowin' in the Wind**". This did not deter the audience who gave him a rapturous reception by normally reserved Japanese standards.

As for the show itself - well, maybe I'm biased, but I thought it was great, and I've yet to meet anyone who was there who disagrees. The Osaka Castle Hall is, of course, an ideal place to play. It is very large (the biggest hall in Japan, I'm told, after Budokan) but very modern and comfortable, and most important, it is considered by many Japanese to have the best acoustics of any hall in Japan. Prices for the show were ¥4,000 and ¥5,000 (approximately £12 and £15). This is not particularly expensive by Japanese standards and is only marginally above the average ticket charges. Sade tickets - she is here in May - are priced at ¥4,500, while the relatively unknown Strawberry Switchblade are charging ¥3,900.

I had been a little dubious about the pairing of Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers with Dylan - a bit like Bobby Robson choosing the entire Everton team to play for England just because they know each other well, I thought.<sup>1</sup> My fears were wrong however, and Petty's band seemed much more in tune with what Dylan wanted than, for example, the musicians backing him at Wembley in 1984. For many of the songs they produced a dark, menacing sound that seemed just right, but when required they could equally well carry off the Spanish/Mexican sound of **Across The Borderline** (shades of **Romance in Durango** here), the delightful country **I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know**, a poignant version of **Lenny Bruce** and a re-vamped **Rainy Day Women #12 & 35**. And, of course, there were Petty's own songs, and a solo Dylan spot, to add to the mixture.

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<sup>1</sup>Just goes to show how times have changed at Goodison, eh? Though the thought of Southall, Gray etc playing for England strikes me as strange..... pedantic ed.

The inclusion of four black girl back-up vocalists was also a good move and gave Dylan even more options. **Trust Yourself** becomes almost a gospel song as a result!

Generally, there were no radical re-arrangements of songs, except for a new lighter, almost pop rendition of **I and I** (not especially recommended), and a brooding, rocky version of **In the Garden**. This did not matter too much, because what he did do was so good that re-arrangements would perhaps have been superfluous. This was just straightforward Dylan giving his best with a good band, plenty of variety and, of course, lots of great material. It all added up to a great experience for the audience.

No less than five songs were included from the current album ***Empire Burlesque***. Although this was for me a disappointing album, some of the songs do come to life on stage: in particular **Trust Yourself** and **Emotionally Yours** - the latter song being recognised immediately and applauded by the Japanese contingent, as it has been featured on TV here. The acoustic trio of **Hard Rain**, **Girl From the North Country** and **It's Alright Ma** were, as expected, excellent - especially for those of us who could understand the words. In fact I think that Dylan himself faltered over some of the words in **It's Alright Ma(!)** Two of my personal favourites from the show were **Just Like a Woman** and a full band version of **Lenny Bruce** which works well, but perhaps the most electric moment for me (apart from the inevitable **Like a Rolling Stone** anthem) was the extended **Knockin' On Heaven's Door** - the last of four encores in a mammoth 27 song Dylan performance. Dylan's harmonica wails and the band just drive along with a great raw sound. An unforgettable finale.

Let's end with a few words from Dylan himself, who was unusually communicative, while retaining at the same time an air of world-weary, slightly amused cynicism. Before going into **Masters of War** he claims *This is a song I wrote about thirty years ago...that was during my protest period.....I'm still in that period.* And in introducing **Ballad of a Thin Man** he says that he wrote this song after *one of those press conferences in London, England. I didn't want to answer any questions, so I didn't. Sometimes you have to do that.*

He shows that his Christianity is still there by choosing to end the set with **In the Garden** - a song written, he says, about his hero, adding *Where I come from there are many heroes. John Wayne, Clark Gable, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen. They're all heroes...to some people I suppose. I don't care nothing about those people.*

Dylan and Petty both prove that they have learned at least one word of Japanese by uttering "domo" (thanks), but Dylan does spring a surprise on the audience by including among the encores an instrumental version, with humming by the girls, of an old Japanese pop song, known in the West as **Sukiyaki**. This was originally by Kyu Sakamoto, who died in the JAL air crash last year.

I don't know too much about the rest of this 'True Confessions' tour, but Osaka anyway was a triumph for Dylan.

Bob Dylan & Tom Petty at Nippon Budokan by Stan Gold for Mainichi Daily News 13/3/86

When Bob Dylan made his first Japan tour about eight years ago, one came away from his concert impressed with the strong effort Dylan made to perform some of his greatest songs with entirely new arrangements. Last week at Nippon Budokan Hall Dylan sprang some even bigger surprises on the audience.

Not only was he playing with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, the best band to back him since Levon and the Hawks, but he also took a nostalgic look back at his past--the days he spent in Hibbing, Minnesota, listening to country music and the late-night rhythm-and-blues stations from Chicago.

Before last week's concert began, the mood for the evening was set with a little-city blues, jump music and early rockabilly. About six songs into the concert itself, Dylan proceeded to do a rock 'n' roll version of a classic pop ballad hit from 1949, Frankie Laine's **That Lucky Old Sun**. Later on, he did a gospel-blues-tinged version of Hank Snow's **I'm Movin' On** - a song that dates back to 1950. Moreover, Dylan performed a wonderful version of **I Forgot More Than You'll Ever Know**, one of 1953's top country hits by the Davis Sisters. He also sang a soft-rock rendition of Ricky Nelson's 1958 oldie **Lonesome Town**.

Dylan performed only two songs associated with his protest period, although upon introducing a rave-up rocking interpretation of **Masters Of War**, he stated, *I wrote it in my protest period; I am still in my protest period!* The other song was **Blowin' in the Wind**, which he sang together with Petty as one of the encore pieces. He omitted such Dylan standards as **The Times They Are A-Changin'**, **It's Alright Ma (I'm Only Bleeding)**, **A Hard Rain's A'Gonna Fall**, **Don't Think Twice It's All Right** and **Forever Young**.

Hearing the combination of the legendary singer-songwriter with one of America's best contemporary rock 'n' roll bands was an overpowering experience throughout their more than 15-minute, (*sic*) 29-song show. It was an evening of one high after another, with the fast pace being broken by two sets done by Petty and his band - **Breakdown**, **So You Want to Be a Rock 'n' Roll Star**, etc.) and a solo set by Dylan.

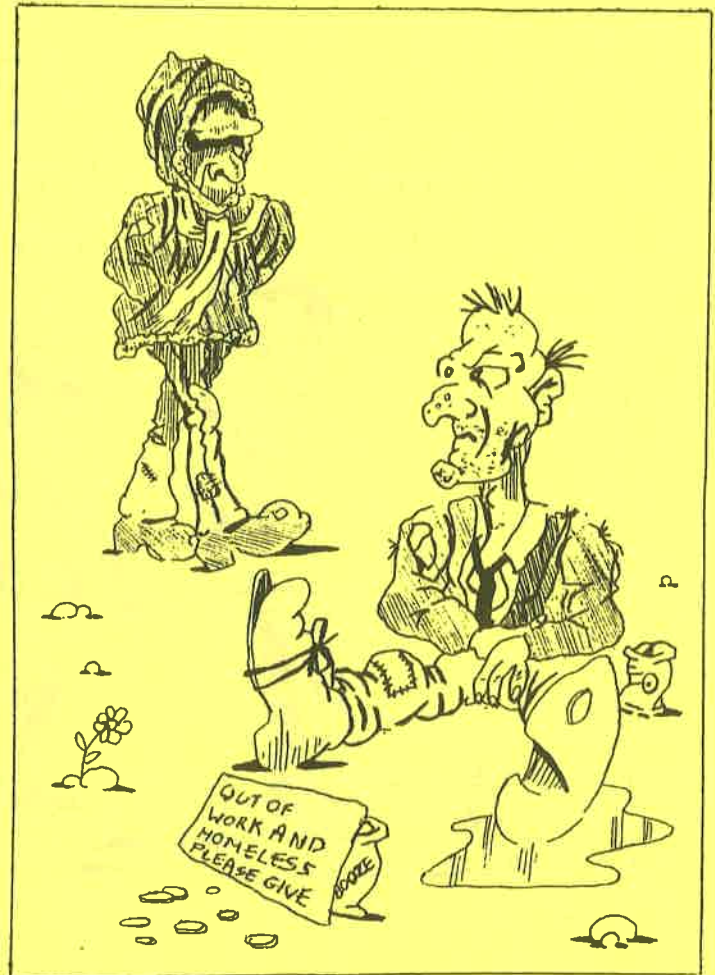
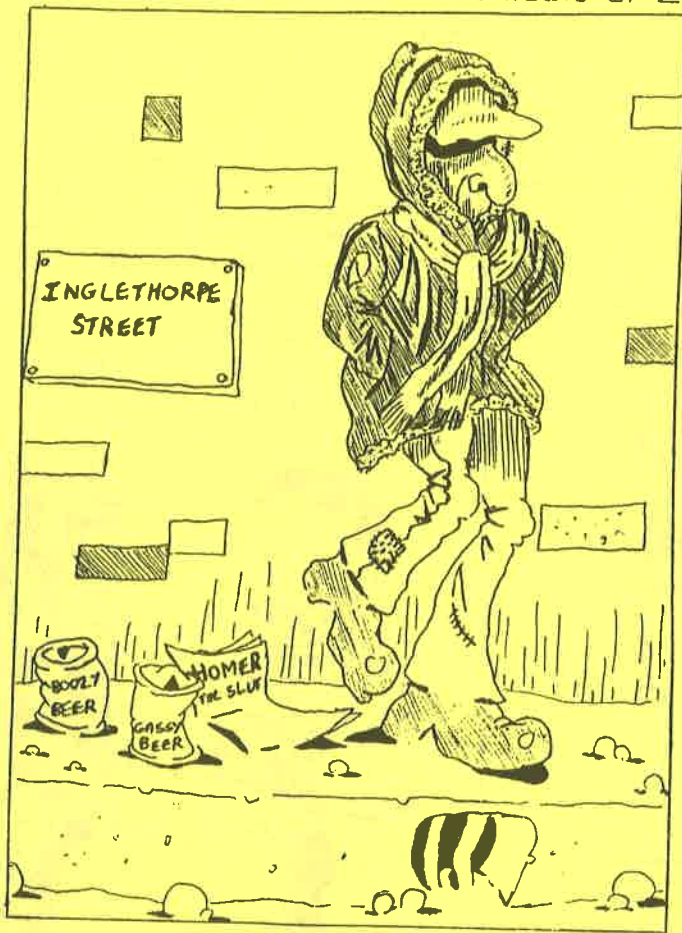
Bob introduced his tribute song **Lenny Bruce** by describing Lenny as a man who died before his time, and noting that there are people today making a lot of money doing the same thing Lenny did years ago - but not as well.

He introduced his concluding song **In the Garden**, a tune from his religious conversion period, by stating that: *There are a lot of heroes that people have--John Wayne, Clark Gable, Ronald Reagan, Richard Nixon, Michael Jackson and Bruce Springsteen --but I've got my own hero.*

The blues and country influences which add to the vitality of the Petty band's mainstream rock 'n' roll sound were strongly apparent in many of the arrangements.

Dylan's highly intense performance was greeted with only mild enthusiasm by the sell-out Budokan crowd, most of whom were probably still in diapers when Dylan's style and music revolutionized American pop music in the '60s.

BOB HITS THE STREETS OF LONDON.....



ANDY MUIR'S 115<sup>TH</sup> DREAM.....



*This is the easiest record I ever made because of Mark Knopfler. He understood the songs so well; of course, he's a songwriter himself, you know, and one of the most sensitive guitar players around. He encouraged me to go to the studio when I didn't feel like it, when I'd have rather been some place else. Actually, we're soul mates. As far as guitar playing goes, he never steps all over with fancy licks. Yeah, Mark was incredible. He helped me make this record in a thousand ways*

*--Bob Dylan, 1983*

KNOPFLER and his engineer, Neil Dorfsman, created, on *Infidels*, what is arguably the most powerful and disciplined ensemble sound on any of Dylan's thirty-five albums. It's an excellent production of a batch of songs which needed and deserved a special expertise to make sure they would hang together as a statement in the same way as Dylan's best Sixties' albums *Highway 61 Revisited* and *Blonde On Blonde* and his Seventies' masterpieces *Planet Waves*, *Blood On The Tracks* and *Desire*.

Indeed, *Blood On The Tracks* would be a far more impressive album if the music had the depth and texture that Knopfler and Dorfsman created. As it is, the sound of *Blood On The Tracks* is weak and neutral. This is a very subjective area, but for some people the ensemble sound of a group is as important as the music or the words because the meaning of a record is as much in the feeling and the sound as in the lyrics. Although Dylan freaks maintain that *Blood On The Tracks* is a better album than *Planet Waves* because the lyrics are more complex, the playing of The Band on *Planet Waves* (and on *The Basement Tapes*) is so sublimely beautiful that many people prefer those albums.

*Jokerman* is a fabulous opening track which chugs and meanders seductively and you wonder, yet again, about his genius for ambiguity. Dylan's voice is a harder, more precise instrument than Knopfler's voice, so it can stand being surrounded by tougher metallic sounds. It can snarl in right after a mean harp solo and still sound tough.

Some of Knopfler's loveliest, most languidly appropriate guitar phrases decorate the payout of *Sweetheart Like You*. One rarely hears a singer who is a master of wordplay, and capable of a hundred vocal nuances, accompanied by a guitarist who finds the right instrumental colours and phrases every time. *Sweetheart* is a great collaboration which shows Dylan at his romantic best, and proves that Knopfler can be a helluva sessionman, especially when he is enjoying himself, as he surely was here.

In his stay-with-me love songs, Dylan has always been shamelessly egocentric. Here, on the last track of *Infidels*, the arrogant young man of 1965 is a forty-year-old Bohemian rock 'n' roller, a lonesome vagabond who is prepared to try any nonsense to get his girl to stay.

Almost no one except Dylan and Van Morrison still records live, singing along with the band on a take, but this album is a fine vindication of such methods. A mood, a sound and a performance are all captured at the moment when the singer and the musicians are performing together and influencing each other. Obviously, it is very easy for a player or singer to make a mistake, and common for that mistake to trigger other mistakes, so recording real music like this, rather than assembling it - over dubbing hundreds of little parts one after the other - is much riskier. But when it works, it is fantastic. Both Dylan and Morrison get a lot of stuff down this way, but they also throw a lot away. There are eight songs on *Infidels*, but more than three times that number of songs were recorded at the album sessions.

In Q's December 1987 'World Exclusive' front cover interview feature (**THERE MAY NOT BE ANOTHER DIRE STRAITS RECORD**) David Hepworth asked: Did you find it easy, when you went to produce him on *Infidels* to say, 'Do it this way Bob, just this once?'

'I was lucky with Bob,' replied Mark. 'He's wild to work with but different people get results different ways. If anybody ever has the dubious fortune to end up in the producer's seat they'll find out for themselves that the best way to go forward is to respect others' feelings about things, sometimes when they're directly opposed to your own. The fact is that we can all be proved wrong and it isn't even a question of how much one knows.'

Knopfler described how he was recording *Local Hero* with Neil Dorfsman and Alan Clark when Dylan dropped in to say hello. So Mark suggested they all carry on in the same studio, using Alan on keyboards. And Bob brought in Sly, Robbie and Mick Taylor: 'With Bob all I did was try and make sure that we were prepared. He would come around to my house and run down some songs on the guitar, and they would change dramatically by the time he left. I would try and make sure that we were in a going mode before we got to the studios, to make sure that we got at least some kind of recording.'

'It worked very well on some things, like **License to Kill** went well on the first take. It was all done live. I learned that from doing **Slow Train Coming**. From Barry Beckett, in fact. You try and get things run down before the thing is attempted, because after two or three times Bob would have moved on to something else.'

*Infidels* would have been a better record if I had mixed the thing, but I had to go on tour in Germany, and then Bob had a weird thing with C.B.S., where he had to deliver records to them at a certain time and I was away in Europe. And he went ahead and got another engineer. So Bob actually re-sang some things, which he shouldn't have done, I don't think, and went ahead to finish it himself.'

On the subject of the one particular unreleased (and increasingly legendary) song, Knopfler was philosophical: 'I wanted **Blind Willie McTell** on the album. But you have got to respect people's positions.'

In the **Toronto Globe and Mail** on 5 November 1983, Peter Keller reported an interview with Dylan in New York. They were talking at 4 a.m. in a hotel room, listening to **Sweetheart Like You** on a ghetto blaster. Thirty songs had been recorded in two months including sixteen new Dylan compositions, and fourteen covers including Willie Nelson's **Angel Flying Too Close To The Ground**.

Dylan talked about the singers he particularly admired like Joe Cocker, Van Morrison and Stevie Wonder - and noted that he didn't like drum machines or synthesisers.

'*Infidels* is frighteningly in touch with the times, pointing the finger at dictators, presidents, would-be-peacemakers and powerbrokers,' wrote Keller. 'It offers plenty of clues as to what is on Dylan's mind, even while its many-levelled lyrics deliver both revelations and riddles to those who would try and pin him down. People want to know where I'm at, Dylan says caustically, because they don't know where they're at.'

The dramatic improvement in musical quality was immediately recognized by critics like Stephen Holden in the Los Angeles Times. 'Bob Dylan's *Infidels* is a disturbing artistic semi-recovery by a rock legend who seemed in recent years to have lost his ability to engage the spirit of the times,' wrote Holden on Sunday, 13 November 1983. 'With its



incendiary political rants, quasi-biblical tirades and surreal love songs, *Infidels* captures the apocalyptic mood of the moment with a shuddering immediacy. Not since *Blood on the Tracks* recorded eight years ago, when Mr Dylan poked the embers of a failed marriage, has the singer stirred up such a flurry of emotional sparks. *Infidels*, like *Blood on the Tracks*, is steeped in an aura of self-righteously accusatory zeal. It wants to be a pop-cultural bolt of lightning.'

Holden was particularly thrilled by the performances which the producer and band had inspired: 'Mr Dylan's singing, which on recent albums has sounded stiffly self-parodic, has become emotionally unblocked. The voice that revolutionised the idea of what was and what was not singing, sounds remarkably youthful, and as expressively freewheeling as it has ever sounded. On its first couple of listenings, *Infidels* offers the charge of a musical roller coaster. The taut, driving arrangements and insinuating cocksure bullishness of Mr Dylan's singing evince such bursting confidence that one doesn't care exactly what the songs are saying. It's enough that each song boasts at least one or two striking couplets and memorable images....'

This is bulls-eye rock criticism: Dylan does sound amazingly youthful, and he's as loose as a goose - very freewheeling, very confident. His voice had become unblocked. Holden continued: 'The best songs on *Infidels* blend the surreal lyric imagery of Mr Dylan's most colourful mid Sixties records with the hellfire and damnation of his recent Christian period into elliptical pop prophecy. While Mr Dylan seems to have abandoned Christian fundamentalism, his experience with it has left a strong biblical flavour in his language and given his pronouncements a harsher moral tone....*Infidels* implies that the world isn't worth saving and that America is leading the world to hell. It is as though the Dylan of the sixties returned for one last time to thumb his nose and gloat: 'I told you so - now let's get the whole thing over with.'

In 1978, Dylan's *Street Legal* had gone to No. 11 in USA, and his Born-Again Christian album *Slow Train Coming* surprisingly reached No. 3 in the USA, and went platinum. However, the following two Christian albums *Saved* (1980) and *Shot of Love* (1981) were slaughtered by the critics and sold poorly.

In sales terms, *Infidels*, released in December 1983, was a substantial success, going gold in USA and climbing to No. 9 in UK. It is one of the finest albums of the early Eighties, and one which Knopfler can look back on with a great deal of pride. By making a rock album, rather than a Dylan album, he brought his American pal back into the radio mainstream. It was a strong comeback for a singer who in 1961 had made his first album in a day at a cost of \$400.

In March 1991 five out-takes from the *Infidels* sessions were among 58 songs released on the critically acclaimed five-album boxed set *Bob Dylan, The Bootleg Series Volumes 1-3 (rare and unreleased) 1961-1991*, and in May an excellent new biography, *Dylan: Behind the Shades* by Clinton Heylin (Viking Press) was published to coincide with Dylan's 50th birthday.

*Lord Protect My Child* is an anxious father's prayer, while *Tell Me* and *Someone's Got a Hold of My Heart* are marvellous romantic numbers on which Sly and Robbie achieve the simple, solid groove that Dylan needs for his free-wheeling, free-questioning love songs.

Given the pessimistic, even paranoid, tenor of most of his music in 1983, it is reassuring to discover that Dylan could still generate a feeling of emotional prosperity. **Foot of Pride** is a song admired by Heylin, one of the world's premier Dylanologists, but it is not musically superior to most of the tracks on *Infidels*, and the lyrics are so obscure that the song sounds unfinished. That may be why he left it off the album, while omitting the other songs for thematic rather than musical reasons.

**Blind Willie McTell**, finally released after eight years in the vaults, is an old fashioned folk blues whose vivid snapshot images have the colloquial concision common to many of the best blues lyrics. It begins quietly, almost tentatively. The understatement of Knopfler's acoustic finger picking makes Dylan's spooky piano even more spine-chilling, and his bleak, hoarse voice evokes the charcoal gypsy maidens, the sweet magnolia bloomin', the chain-gang on the highway. Dylan loves the integrity of the lone bluesman just as he hates the corrupt power and technology of corporate America.

Genius is simplicity, and good production is what you leave out, and no-one knows this better than Knopfler, who has been a folk-blues aficionado since the late-sixties. A sparse instrumentation suited the subject of the song, and Knopfler was exactly the right man in the right place at the right time, ideally equipped to help Dylan deliver an extraordinarily compelling six minutes of music. **Blind Willie McTell** is a truly magical vocal performance, as well as being one of the most atmospheric piano-guitar duets ever recorded. Indeed, Knopfler's acoustic playing is so tasty, so sympathetic, that you wonder what he would sound like duetting with a really funky pianist like Allen Toussaint.

Clinton Heylin, incidentally, notes that, 'The sessions did not always progress smoothly. It was widely reported in the press that Knopfler walked out of one session in disgust for reasons unknown. Thankfully he did return and the sessions were completed by the beginning of May, in time for Knopfler and Clark to resume touring Germany with Dire Straits.'

Heylin says Dylan then re-mixed and re-recorded some of the album because he thought it sounded over-produced, too much like the Eagles. Dylan had often preferred to cut a song before the band had really had time to learn it, but now, twenty-two years after making his debut album, he needed a more polished modern sound.

The Mark Knopfler/Neil Dorfsman studio team had proved themselves masters of showcasing an idiosyncratic vocal within a colourful, commercial backing track. That mixture of rough voice and smooth instruments was what had given Dire Straits such a distinctive ensemble sound.

Perhaps the restless, impatient Dylan should have trusted his co-producer's ears, taken his advice about including **Blind Willie McTell**, and waited until Mark and Neil had time to mix the album for him. *Infidels* would have sounded stronger, got more airplay, and sold more units.

From Myles Palmer's *Mark Knopfler; Sidwick & Jackson,*  
London, 1992



