GRATEFUL DEAD

Title: Road Trips Volume 2 Number 2

Label: Grateful Dead

Release Date: 2009

Medium: CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Carousel Ballroom, San Francisco, CA

Recording Date: February 14, 1968

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Ron McKernan - Keyboards, harmonica, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Mickey Hart - Drums

Set List: **First Set And Bonus**

Morning Dew
Good Morning Little School Girl
Dark Star
China Cat Sunflower
The Eleven
Turn On Your Love Light
Viola Lee Blues (Eureka – 1/20/68)
Beat It On Down The Line (Seattle 1/23/68)
It Hurts Me Too (Seattle 1/23/68)
Dark Star (Portland, 2/2/

Second Set

That's It For The Other One
New Potato Caboose
Born Cross-Eyed
Spanish Jam
Alligator
Caution (Do Not Stop On Tracks)
Feedback
In The Midnight Hour

The legacy of the Grateful Dead is massive. Without question, they were the most successful live band in the history of music. They played 2318 concerts during their career, performing in 298 cities and generating 225 million dollars in sales. In their later years, they were a virtual money making machine, netting more net profits from their annual tours than any other rock band. While they were known for their fanatically loyal fans, the band also sold more records than most people realize.

Over their career, the band released four multi platinum albums, two platinum albums, fifteen gold albums, and five gold selling videos. As of 6 the band has placed an unbelievable 100 records on the American pop albums chart and their total U.S. album sales is 19.5 million. They have also placed six singles on the U.S. pop singles chart. While they were largely an American phenomena, they did chart eight albums in England.

In addition to their concert and record sales revenue, the group was, and still is, a merchandising machine, selling tens of millions of dollars from tee shirts etc. every year. Even in 2024, over twenty years after the death of Jerry Garcia, they still maintain a large staff of employees who handle the continuing business ventures associated with the band. As the lyrics to one of their songs best said, "What a long, strange trip it's been".

The band has also redefined marketing and are often used as case studies for major corporations. They realized early on in their career that their product was their audience and they did everything they could to make sure that their audiences got what they wanted. As early as 1971, they were encouraging fans to write

them and eventually opened a hot line for fans to call them. There were over 70,000 people registered as deadheads at their peak. They allowed fans to tape their shows and encouraged those fans to trade the tapes among themselves. Incredibly, there is at least one live recording of over 2200 of their 2,318 shows and their own inventory numbers 11,215, with many shows taped multiple times. All of them can be streamed for free.

They set up a publishing company, a merchandising company, a ticketing company, and an overall corporation, with rotating CEOs and an a board of directors made up of band members. That meant that no one member had more power than any other, at least on paper. They even frequently consulted back office employees and their road crew regarding major decisions. They were the first band to provide their employees with profit sharing and health coverage. Fans who attended their shows were greeted with an infinite variety of songs and arrangements, meaning no two shows were ever alike. At their height, they were prepared on any given night to play any one of 150 songs.

As if all of this wasn't enough, they also elevated the art of recording and developed the best sound system in the business. Their early seventies sound system was one of the most advanced, and loudest, sound systems ever developed. In short, there was nothing like them at the time or since. The Grateful Dead were inducted into the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame in 1994.

With the death of Bob Weir on January 10, 2026 from lung disease, the only original member of the band who has survived is Bill Kreutzmann. Mickey Hart, who first joined shortly after their formation, is also alive and well. Jerry Garcia passed away in in 1995, Pigpen McKernan passed away in 1973, Phil Lesh passed away in 2024 and Bob Weir in 2026.

The heart of the band was its founder, Jerry Garcia. Garcia was born Jerome John Garcia on August 1, 1942 in San Francisco, CA. His father, Jose Ramon Garcia, was of Spanish descent while his mother, Ruth Marie Clifford, hailed from Irish and Swedish roots. He was the second of two boys in the family,. His older brother, Cliffor, was born in 1937. The two boys grew up surrounded by music. Their father was a retired professional musician and their mother was a nurse, who also played the piano. His father and his family had emigrated from Spain in 1917. He married Ruth in the early thirties.

Jose Ramon Garcia owned a bar in downtown San Francisco that he opened when he was blackballed by the musicians union for playing moonlight gigs during the depression. He played clarinet, sax, reeds, and woodwinds in jazz bands. When Jerry was only five years old, two events took place that altered his entire life. In the spring of 1947, his family was vacationing in the Santa Cruz Mountains when his brother accidently cut off two thirds of the middle finger on his right hand while the two were splitting wood.

Then, his father died while fly fishing in Arcata in Northern California on August 25, 1947. He slipped after entering the Trinity River and got caught in the current. He drowned before other fishermen could reach him. In the wake of his father's death, Garcia's mother took over the bar and began to work full time there. At that point, Clifford and Jerry spent most of his time with her parents, Tillie and William Clifford.

Meanwhile, Jerry's house was filled with musical instruments, including a piano, which his mother played. She gave Jerry piano lessons but he never learned to read music and did not excel. However, he discovered that he had a good ear for melodies, which he took advantage of during family singalongs. He sang pop songs with his brother and cousin, learning how to harmonize at an early age. While living with his grandparents, Jerry went to Monroe Elementary School, where a third grade teacher encouraged him to draw and paint. He would paint throughout his entire life.

He also was exposed to country and bluegrass music by his grandmother, who loved to listen to radio broadcasts from the Grand Ole Opry. In 1953, Garcia's mother remarried and moved the family to Menlo Park to escape the crime problems in their neighborhood. While attending school in Menlo Park, he started to listen to Ray Charles, John Lee Hooker, B.B. King, Hank Ballard, and early rock and roll artists like Chuck Berry and Little Richard. He was also encouraged by another teacher to read popular novels like **1984**. That allowed him to broaden his horizons outside of his near term existence.

The family moved back to San Francisco in 1955 and Jerry started to go to Denman Junior High. He fell in with a group of rough teens and smoked his first marijuana joint when he was 15 years old. By this point, he had not done anything with his music other than trying to play rock and roll songs on the piano. As a way to try to center her child, his mother bought him an accordion for his 15th birthday. He was able to convince her to trade it in for his first guitar, an electric Danelectro, which came with a tiny amplifier.

Since there was no one around who knew how to play guitar, he taught himself how to tune and pick by ear. He then met someone at school who knew basic chords, and he got hooked. He spent all of his waking hours playing, to the detriment of his school work. While attending Balboa High School in 1958, he was always in trouble for skipping classes or fighting. In order to get her son to a safer environment, his mother moved the family once again, this time to Cazadero, which was located 90 miles north of San Francisco. Jerry enrolled at Analy High School and joined his first band, the Chords. They were good enough to win a talent show. The prize was that they could record any song they wanted. They picked "Raunchy" by Bill Justis.

In 1960, Garcia left high school and joined the Army. After receiving basic training at Fort Ord, he was assigned to Fort Winfield Scott in the Presidio of San Francisco. He was discharged on December 14, 1960 after only serving nine months. During his brief stay in the Army, he learned how to play acoustic guitar. After leaving the service, Garcia moved to Palo Alto, where one of his middle school friends, Laird Grant, was living. He had bought a 1950 Cadillac while still in the army and wound up living in it whenever he could not find a place to sleep. Within a few weeks, he met Dave McQueen, who heard him play and introduced him to Lee Adams, who managed a local rooming house near Stanford University.

On February 20, 1961, Garcia was a passenger in a car driven by Adams along with two friends, Paul Speegle and Alan Trist. Adams was speeding and lost control, crashing into a guardrail. Garcia, Adams, and Trist were thrown from the car and miraculously survived while Speegle was killed inside the vehicle. The accident was a wakeup call for Garcia, who decided it was time to get serious about his life. He decided that his future was in music, not art, and he began to practice guitar endlessly.

In April, 1961, Garcia met the first of many people who would change his life. Robert Hunter (born Robert Burns on June 23, 1941 in Arroyo Grande, CA), was raised in a broken home and spent a few years in foster homes because his mother could not afford to care for him when his father left. His mother remarried when he was eleven and he moved back in with her. His stepfather was a publisher, who encouraged Hunter to write. His first work was a fifty page fairy tale that he wrote the same year he moved back in with his mother.

While attending high school, Hunter learned how to play guitar and trumpet. While attending the University Of Connecticut, he played trumpet in a band called the Crescents. He dropped out of the university after one year and joined the National Guard. After doing a six month tour of duty he was discharged right around the same time as Garcia.

He was first introduced to Garcia via a common girlfriend. The two immediately became close friends and began to play Palo Alto bookstores and folk clubs, sometimes under the name Bob and Jerry. However, Garcia's playing soon outstripped Hunter's talent and he quickly joined local bluegrass groups like the Thunder Mountain Tub Thumpers, the Hart Valley Drifters, and the Wildwood Boys. Hunter sometimes played mandolin with the same bands but became more interested in writing. In 1962, he wrote a book, **The Silver Snarling Trumpet**. While it was not published, it helped the writer develop an uncanny ear for storytelling and dialogue.

When Garcia was in the Wildwood Boys, he met David Nelson (born June 12, 1943 in Seattle, Washington). The guitarist would later play with Jerry in the New Riders Of The Purple Sage and the Jerry Garcia Acoustic Bands He also met Phil Lesh (born Phillip Chapman Lesh on March 15, 1940 in Berkeley, CA). Lesh started out as a violin player but switched to trumpet while attending Berkeley High School. He was good enough on the instrument to study under Bob Hansen, who the Conductor of the Golden Gate Park Symphonic Band. It was during this time that Lesh developed a love for avant-garde classical music and free jazz.

While studying music at San Francisco State University, Lesh was not able to land a spot in the school's orchestra. He dropped out and successfully auditioned for the Sixth Army Band which was based at the Presidio. However, he was deemed unfit for military service and could not join. He decided to enroll at the College Of San Mateo, where he wrote charts and became first trumpet chair with their well regard big band. He transferred to the University Of California, Berkeley in 1961, where he met keyboardist Tom Constanten (born March 19, 1944 in Long Branch, New Jersey).

Lesh dropped out of Berkeley after one semester to study under the Italian composer, Luciano Berio, who was teaching a graduate level course at Mills College in the spring of 1962. He also volunteered to work for KPFA FM as a recording engineer. The audience funded station was located in downtown Berkeley. They were known for their willingness to broadcast nearly any style of music. While working there, he met Garcia at a party in Menlo Park While the two approached music from entirely different directions, they became friends. Lesh suggested that he record Garcia for KPFA and the guitarist agreed. The recordings were later featured on a 90 minute KPFA special broadcast, The Long Black Veil and Other Ballads, An Evening with Jerry Garcia.

The broadcast was well received and Garcia soon found himself teaching guitar and banjo while continuing to play in various bands. One of his students was Bob Matthews, who was attending Menlo-Atherton High School and was friends with Bob Weir. He introduced Weir to Garcia on New Year's Eve, 1963.

Weir was born Robert Hall Parber on October 16, 1947 in San Francisco, CA. His father and mother were still in college and decided to give their baby up for adoption. His adoptive parents, Frederic Utter Weir and Eleanor Cramer Weir, raised him. After experimenting with the piano and trumpet, he began to play guitar at the age of 13. He dropped in and out of various high schools, not realizing that he suffered from dyslexia, and by the age of 16 was fully focusing on music.

Garcia was a member of the Sleepy Hollow Hog Stompers with Marshall Leicester and Dick Arnold when he met Weir. After meeting Weir at Dana Morgan Music Store, the two jammed and discovered that they were compatible musicians. Garcia was five years older than Weir and became his mentor. Around

the same time, Garcia met Ron McKernan (born Ronald Charles McKernan on September 8, 1945 in San Bruno, CA).

McKernan's father, Phil McKernan, was an R&B and Blues DJ, who worked at KDIA. As such, his son had grown up listening to that kind of music. He taught himself how to play harmonica, guitar, and piano. After moving to Palo Alto with his family, he met Garcia in 1959 at Dana Morgan's Music Store, where both wound up working. While playing a show there, Garcia invited McKernan onstage to accompany him on harmonica and sing. He was impressed and the two started playing together.

McKernan had adopted a biker like persona and dressed sloppily and rarely bathed. Before long, he had earned the name Pigpen from the character in the Peanuts comic strip. Garcia and McKernan were in and out of groups together so when Garcia and Weir decided to form a band, he was a natural fit. That band became Mother McCree's Uptown Jug Champions and also included Dave Parker, Tom Stone, and Mike Garbett. By July, 1964 the new band was booking gigs and were recorded live at the Tangent Coffee House in Palo Alto by Stanford students Pete Wanger and Wayne Ott to broadcast on FM station KZSU. Amazingly, Wanger later found the tapes in 1997 and the performance was released in 1999.

During that same year, Garcia took LSD for the first time. It profoundly affected him, opening him up to new ideas and perceptions. One of those involved the jug band. Both Garcia and Weir had watched the Beatles storm the music world and decided that they wanted to move into a more rock direction. In late 1964, they formed the Warlocks, taking McKernan with them. They initially had Dana Morgan Jr., the son of the owner of the record store where they worked, with them on bass.

The last piece of the Warlocks was drummer Bill Kreutzmann (born William Kreutzmann Jr. on May 7, 1946 in Palo Alto, CA). Kreutzmann had started playing drums at the age of 13. He was a fan of r&b artists like Ray Charles and listened to jazz drummers in the local clubs whenever he could sneak in. He first met Garcia in a music store. With the lineup intact, the Warlocks began to rehearse whenever they could and played their first live show on May 4, 1965 at Magoo's Pizza Parlor in Menlo Park. They also played there on May 12 and May 27. After the three gigs, it was apparent that Morgan was not working out, so Garcia contacted his old friend, Phil Lesh.

By this point, Lesh had twice worked for the Post Office been a keno marker in Las Vegas, and was playing with Steve Reich, Jon Gibson, and Tom Constanten for the San Francisco Mime Troupe. He had stayed in touch with Garcia, who asked him to learn bass and join the Warlocks. Lesh eagerly took on the assignment. Since he never play bass before, he had no standards of how to play it or what role it could play in a band. He studied jazz bassist like Charles Mingus and Jimmy Garrison and picked up the instrument quickly. Later, he closely watched Jack Casady's playing when he joined Jefferson Airplane in late 1965 and was a huge fan of Jack Bruce.

Lesh's first show with the band was on June 18 at Frenchy's. The Warlocks played a series of shows in various bars and clubs into November, 1965. They then discovered that an East Coast band was using the same name. Ironically, that band changed their name the same month to Velvet Underground. The name Grateful Dead came from Garcia, although there are conflicting explanations of where Garcia found it. Lesh remembers that he was reading an old **Britannica World Language Dictionary** and came upon it. Alan Trist, who directed the band's music publishing company, remembers that he was playing a game of Fictionary and stumbled across it in a **Funk & Wagnalls Folklore Dictionary**.

There is no question that the name had a lot to do with the band's initial success. The third album I ever bought was *Anthem Of The Sun* and I bought it solely based on the name. It had a sinister connotation even

though it technically means “the soul of a dead person, or his angel, showing gratitude to someone who, as an act of charity, arranged their burial”. It is also used in numerous cultures. It was the perfect choice and it immediately set them apart from all their contemporaries.

While there is some mystery to this, most music historians accept that the first show the band played under the Grateful Dead moniker was on December 4, 1965 at a Ken Kesey Acid Test in San Jose. They also played at Kesey’s Acid Tests on December 11, 18, and 24. In between, they played their first show at the Fillmore Auditorium on December 10. They also picked Rock Scully as their manager, along with his partner, Danny Rifkin. They would prove to be two of the more capable managers in the music business.

In early January, 1966, they played three shows at The Matrix and another acid test at the Fillmore Auditorium on January 8. Another show at the Matrix followed and they played Bill Graham’s third, and final, Mime Troupe Benefit show on January 14, 1966. After some more shows at The Matrix, they played their first notable show as part of Ken Kesey’s Trips Festival, which was held between January 21 and January 23. The festival was held at the Longshoremen’s Hall and featured several artists, with music provided by Big Brother and The Holding Company and the Grateful Dead. Over 10,000 people attended the multimedia festival. The two bands played sets on January 22, when the acid test took place, and the closing night of January 23.

The following month, the band members met Owsley Stanley, who became their financial backer, including renting them a house and buying them sound equipment. In total, the group played over 100 documented shows in 1966. They included their first shows at The Matrix, The Avalon Ballroom, The Family Dog, and Winterland. They traveled to Los Angeles for the first time and played a three night engagement in Vancouver, Canada, which was the first time they left the country. They closed the year with their first New Year’s Eve show at the Fillmore Auditorium.

With the San Francisco music scene exploding in 1966, all the major Los Angeles based labels began to send representatives to the various ballrooms to hear the bands play. The Grateful Dead were initially against the idea of signing with a major label but quickly changed their minds. They were wooed most heavily by Warners Brothers, who desperately needed to update their stodgy artist list. They presented them with a contract on September 30, which the band signed on December 28, 1966.

The group received a $3500.00 advance against future royalties. Their domestic and foreign royalty rate for the first year was 5%, which was good at the time. The domestic royalties would escalate to 8% the following year. If the band sold 15,000 copies of their first album, they were scheduled to receive another $6500.00 advance. The term of the first deal was three years.

While the band members were the epitome of the hippie culture, they were shrewd businessmen right from the start. Scully and Rifkin were particularly good at their jobs. In addition to the favorable royalty rates and advances, they had gotten Warners to agree to allow the band members to own their own recordings and had convinced Garcia and company to set up a publishing partnership, which Hunter named Ice Nine after an element in Kurt Vonnegut’s novel, **Cat’s Cradle**. The partnership agreement was drafted by San Francisco based music lawyer, Brian Rohan.

They also based product owed on minutes rather than songs, borrowing from the standard agreement that jazz artists made with their labels. This would prove to be significant in later years when the band wanted to end their relationship with Warners and avoided the tragic mess that John Fogerty would wind up with Fantasy Records in the early seventies when he owed them move songs than he could complete in a lifetime.

The Dead recorded their debut album over four days in January, 1967. David Hassinger produced the albums, which was recorded in Los Angeles because none of the studios in San Francisco had modernized equipment. Hassinger was selected as their producer based on his work with the Rolling Stones and on Jefferson Airplane's second album. The album was released on March 17, 1967. *The Grateful Dead* (#73-1967) made the American pop albums chart in early May and rose to number 73 during a twenty six week chart run.

The album was a hodgepodge of various styles, with lead vocals alternated between Garcia, Weir, and McKernan. It largely consisted of covers by blues artists like Sonny Boy Williamson, folk artists like Bonnie Dobson/Tim Rose and Jesse Fuller, and a jug based song by Noah Lewis. There were only two original compositions. True to their nature, the band played 126 documented shows in support of the album through 1967. They were mainstays at the Fillmore Auditorium, Winterland, The Whisky A Go-Go, The Rock Garden, and the Avalon during the first part of the year.

They traveled to NYC for the first time in June, where they played a number of shows at the Café au Go-Go as well as free concerts at Tompkins Park on June 1 and Central Park on June 8. The band members were intimidated by the city and barely left their hotels, before heading back to California to play the Monterey Pop Festival.

The band played Monterey on Sunday night, impossibly sandwiched between The Who and Jimi Hendrix. The band members all felt that they had played badly during their three song set, which may be one of the reasons why none of their performance was captured on film or in the multi artists compilations that followed. They immediately resumed touring after the show, performing around San Francisco before heading to the Northwest and Toronto. In August, they Montreal and Michigan for the first time. They ended the year with more shows on the West Coast before hitting Boston and New York.

In September, 1967, the band added drummer Mickey Hart (born Michael Steven Hartman on September 11, 1943 in Brooklyn, New York). His father, Lenny Hart, was a well-known drummer. His mother, Leah, also played drums as well as working as a bookkeeper and gown maker. Lenny Hart left the family when Michael was a toddler but influenced his son from afar. When Michael was ten, he discovered his father's practice pad and drumsticks and was hooked. Like his father, he learned rudimental drum patterns and became so good that he was in the first chair in the All State Band under the direction of Arthur Foens.

While in high school, he worked at a jazz club and watched Tito Puente's band play there a number of times. His international education continued after high school when he discovered the Nigerian drummer, Babatunde Olatunji, who would later become his teacher. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1961 and was a drummer in The Airmen Of Note, the service's elite big band. He was stationed in Europe for three and one half years, touring with the band. During this time, he sat in with jazz musicians like Gerry Mulligan and Count Basie. He also formed Joe and the Jaguars with guitarist Joe Bennett, who was also in the Air Force.

Hart was discharged in 1965 and briefly returned to NYC, where he joined the local musicians union and played whenever he could. While in California during his early time with the Air Force, Hart had found his father, who was a savings and loan Executive in Los Angeles and also involved with Remo Inc, a musical instruments manufacturer specializing in drums. He briefly met him but his father disappeared and Hart was transferred to Spain.

After his discharge, he decided to track him down once again and the two re-established their relationship. His father was working at Drum City, a drum centered music store in San Carlos, California. He invited his son to help him manage the store. Mickey also joined William Penn and His Pals in 1966 for a brief period, before reuniting with Bennett. By the end of the year, Bennett had reenlisted and Hart was living in San Francisco with a friend. He met Bill Kreutzmann at a Count Basie Orchestra performance at the Fillmore Auditorium, in August, 1967. The two were mutual admirers of Basie's drummer, Sonny Payne. They quickly hit it off and started hanging out together.

Through Kreutzmann, Hart was invited to rehearse with the Grateful Dead but could not find the address where they practiced. However, he went to their September 29 show at the Straight Theatre and sat in with the band during their second set. Just like that, he became a member of the band. Hart's international and technical approach to drumming worked perfectly with the looser playing Kreutzmann, taking the band's music to a much more sophisticated level.

None of the members of the Grateful Dead were happy with the sound of their debut album, which they believed did not capture the strength of their live performances. As a result, they put off work on their follow-up until November, 1967, when they went into the studio with Hassinger in NYC. This was just after the arrest of Weir and McKernan at their rented home in Haight-Asbury. Police found a pound of marijuana and hashish.

All the parties were determined to make an album that reflected their live sound. The process of creating the initial studio tracks was painstakingly slow. The band members were spending most of their time experimenting and teaching themselves on the go about studio recording processes. Hassinger grew increasingly more frustrated with the lack of progress and quit when the album was only one third completed.

At that point, the band members returned to San Francisco and came up with an unique idea. They would take snippets of music from their live concerts and splice it together with snippets of studio recordings to develop a hybrid live/studio song. Their live soundman, Dan Healy, became a co producer and worked with Garcia and Lesh to find suitable material from their concert tapes to splice with the studio recordings they had made in NYC. In the end, the live material came from two Los Angeles shows recorded the previous November and was combined with new live material they recorded during tours of the Pacific Northwest and California during the first three months of 1968.

The process of splicing together segments from the two sources to create a song was painstakingly slow. To make matters even more complicated, they hired Tom Constanten, who was on leave from the Air Force, to provide piano and electronic tape effects. They also experimented with numerous instruments, including kazoos, crotales, harpsichord, timpani, trumpet, and guiro. In the end, the album was more of a collage of sounds then true songs and more avant-garde then the experimental music of John Cage and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

While all of this was going on, Warner Brothers was pressing the band to give them anything that they could release. In May, 1967, Garcia had developed the chord sequence for a new song, but did not have lyrics. A few months later, Robert Hunter heard the band playing around with the track and quickly developed lyrics, reworking the opening lines of "The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock" for the chorus. The resulting song, "Dark Star", was released as a single in April, 1968. The B side was a Weir written piece called "Born Cross-Eyed". The single flopped, only selling 500 of the 1600 copies initially printed.

The new album, *Anthem Of The Sun* (#87-1968), was finally released on July 18, 1968. It cracked the American pop albums chart in late August and peaked at number 87 during a seventeen week chart run. While the album is now ranked number 288 on Rolling Stone's 500 Greatest Albums Of All Time, it did not go over well initially because of its complexity and difficulty to follow.

Once again, the band toured extensively in support. They played nearly 120 shows in 1968 in total, not straying from their home base for the first three months of the year. In mid-April, they hit Florida for the first time with a run of shows at the Thee Image Club in Sunny Isles before playing a three night stand at the Electric Factory in Philadelphia. They returned to NYC, highlighted by a show in Central Park on May 5, 1968. They also played festivals like the Northern California Folk-Rock Festival in mid-May. On June 14, they made their debut at the Fillmore East, followed by an appearance at the Newport Pop Festival in California.

They played the Fillmore West on August 20, 21, and 22. They returned there the following week for three more shows, played the Sky River Rock Festival in Sultan, Washington on September 2, hit the Fillmore West yet again in early November, and did shows in Ohio, Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Louisville, before returning to Florida to play the Miami Pop Festival in late December. They concluded the year with a New Year's Eve show at Winterland.

In September, 1968, they started working on their third studio album, producing it themselves. It was recorded entirely in San Francisco and featured the debut of Tom Constanten as an official member. He had joined the touring band in November, 1968. Hunter also became a full time contributor. The recording process was delayed by the introduction of Ampeg's first 16 track multitrack recording machine, which the band eagerly adopted. They had already recorded the initial version on 8 tracks and threw out all those tracks to take advantage of the new technology.

The new album, *Aoxomoxoa* (#73-1969), was released on June 20, 1969. It immediately entered the American pop albums chart and rose to number 73 during a short eleven week chart run. Sales did not close to recovering the massive amounts of money they spent on recording the album, which totaled $180,000, an enormous sum at that time. It would be the last time that the band would run up such high studio costs. Despite not selling well, the album yielded three concert favorites, "St. Stephen", "China Cat Sunflower", and "Dupress's Diamond Blues". "China Cat Sunflower" remained a staple of their live sets for their entire performance career.

As was the case in previous years, the band played live as often as they could. They nearly performed 140 times during the year before and after the album was released. They toured all over North America, hitting towns that they had not visited before. They started the year with a three night stand at the Fillmore West, played the Fillmore East in mid-February, and would return to both venues later in the year. They made a memorable appearance on *Playboy After Dark* and played the biggest festival of all, Woodstock, on August 16, 1969.

The Dead's appearance at Woodstock was a disaster. They were originally scheduled to go on at 8:40 pm on Saturday night, following Creedence Clearwater Revival and preceding Janis Joplin. Of course, the schedule was significantly delayed by Saturday evening and a decision was made to put them on at 10:45 pm, right before CCR and after Mountain. At the time, it was pouring rain.

Right from the start, the set was plagued with problems. There was a fear that the stage would collapse because of the weight of their equipment. The band members were high on acid and there were all kinds of

miscellaneous, unknown, bystanders watching just offstage. The band only played five songs, but were onstage for nearly two hours, long past their scheduled time. Midway through their set, Stanley decided that the stage was not properly grounded and they took a ten minute break while he tried to rewire it with the site electrician. Weir was almost killed when he touched the strings of his guitar with the microphone.

By the time they finally wrapped up at 12:30 am, they had put half a million people to sleep during a nearly 50 minute version of "Turn On Your Lovelight". The mood of the audience was so bad that John Fogerty refused to permit any part of CCR's performance to be included in the film or soundtrack because the vibe was awful and he assumed, inaccurately so, that CCR had not played well.

Not surprisingly, the Dead's performance was not included in the Woodstock film or soundtrack. However, "Dark Star" was finally released in 2009 as part of the six disc, *Woodstock 40 Years On: Back To Yasgur's Farm* to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the festival. Bob Weir has described their performance as the worse of their career while Phil Lesh and Garcia called it a disaster.

Fortunately, it did not matter one bit that the band had blown the most important appearance of their career to date. Unless you were there, no one heard it for years and most people do not remember that they even played the festival. They played the Vancouver Pop Festival less than ten days later, quickly followed by an appearance at the New Orleans Pop Festival. In late September, they were back at the Fillmore East, played the Rock Jubilee in Houston, did the Fillmore West in early and late December, and played at the Miami Rock Festival on December 28. They finished the year with a New Year's Eve gig at the Boston Tea Party.

On December 6, 1969, the band was involved in the most notorious rock festival in music history. The Rolling Stones had decided to end their U.S. tour with a free concert at the Altamont Raceway in Livermore, California. The idea for the concert came from the management teams of the Stones, the Dead, and Jefferson Airplane. Michael Lang agreed to organize the show, which was initially going to be held at San Jose State University's football practice field, where a three day outdoor festival had just been held.

However, the city of San Jose did not want to authorize another large concert and turned the promoters down. They then contacted city officials in San Francisco to hold it at Golden Gate State Park but those plans were thwarted by a previously scheduled professional football game at Kezar Stadium. It appeared that a deal with Sears Point Raceway was a go when the owner of the race track demanded a $300,000 upfront cash deposit and a piece of the proposed film distribution rights. Two days before the scheduled show date, the Sears deal fell apart and Lang was at wits end.

Just as it appeared that the show would be cancelled, Altamont Raceway owner Dick Carter offered his venue. The Dead's manager, Rock Scully flew over the site in a helicopter with Lang and they decided to proceed. With less than two days to pull the event together, the final logistics were daunting. The stage wound up at a low point on the site with only a little over three feet separating the performers from the audience. To help ensure the safety of the bands, the Stones' management teamed hired the Hells Angels to provide security. The idea was approved by Scully and Jefferson Airplane's management team. They were to be paid with $500 worth of beer.

The first band to perform was Santana, who played a relatively smooth set. However, as the day progressed, the mood of the audience and the Angels became progressively more violent. Jefferson Airplane played next and the results were a precursor to what lay ahead. Some of the crowd knocked over one of the Angels' motorcycles and a fight ensued. Marty Balin tried to intervene and was knocked

unconscious by an Angel. A near fight also almost took place between another Angel and Paul Kanter when Kanter commented about the Balin attack.

The Flying Burrito Brothers played next and amazingly, the crowd and the Angels calmed down. However, tensions escalated once again during Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young's set and Stills was repeatedly stabbed in the leg by an Angel with a sharpened bicycle spoke. The Grateful Dead were scheduled to play after CSN&Y but had left the racetrack after they were told what had happened to Balin. It was the smartest thing they ever did.

During the Rolling Stones evening set, all hell broke loose and an audience member, Meredith Hunter, tried to climb on stage and was punched and driven back into the audience. He then returned, pulled out a gun and was stabbed to death by Hells Angel Alan Passaro. Hunter was confirmed to be high on methamphetamine when he was killed. Passaro was acquitted from a murder charge because a jury saw film of the incident and concluded that he acted in self-defense.

On November 10, Warner Brothers released the band's first official live album, *Live/Dead* (#64-1969). It was recorded at the Avalon and Fillmore West in January, February, and March, 1969. It made the American pop albums chart in early January and rose to number 64 during a fifteen week chart run. The album is ranked number 244 on Rolling Stone's magazine 500 Greatest Albums Of All Time. Sources have indicated that the album fulfilled the terms of the original Warners contract. It was later revealed that that contract was based on minutes per record, not songs, and included three albums plus an option for the fourth, which the live recording fulfilled.

At the time, Columbia Records was courting the band. Warner Brothers knew this and were anxious to extend the original contract. Via California law, it could not be extended the end of 1973 as all contracts had to expire after seven years. While they were significantly in debt to the label, they brought a certain degree of gravitas in the otherwise stodgy Warner catalog. Therefore, the label would have been anxious to keep them.

On top of all of this was Lenny Hart, Mickey's father. He had taken over the band's finances in 1968 and secretly entered into negotiations with Warner in late 1969 to renew the contract. In fact, he did just that, extracting a $75,000 advance from the label in return for the band delivering five albums, with a label option for two more, by the end of 1973.

The band also made several key business decisions in 1970. Surprisingly business savvy for a group of self-proclaimed hippies, the band members was willing to invest in themselves. As early as January, 1968, the came up with a plan to break Bill Graham's hold over concert activity in San Francisco. They teamed with Jefferson Airplane and Quicksilver Messenger Service to rent the Carousel Ballroom and stage their own concerts. Each band owned 10 percent of the enterprise. They also formed their own sound company, Alembic Sound, to further develop their own sound systems.

In 1970, they took things to another level. First, they incorporated Ice Nine Publishing with the help of their long time lawyer, Hal Kant. Hunter was elected CEO and majority shareholder. He hired Alan Trist to run the day to day management and licensing activities. They also set up Grateful Dead Merchandising, correctly surmising that there were huge potential profits in terms of tee shirts and other memorabilia. Finally, they set up Grateful Dead Productions, Inc, a formal entity with a Board of Directors.

With their business affairs in order, the band members knew that they were at a crossroads. Garcia was well aware that music tastes were changing. The psychedelia of their first three albums was rapidly becoming passe and the band had not made any money from their recordings, even though they owned all their music. He was also aware of the burgeoning folk rock recordings of the Flying Burrito Brothers, the Byrds, and Poco. He also saw how the mellow, roots oriented music of Crosby, Stills & Nash and The Band had sold very well. In fact, Garcia played pedal steel guitar on "Teach Your Children" from CSN&Y's 1970 album, *Déjà vu*, and had advanced knowledge of the album before it's release in March, 1970.

While the guitarist believed in the hippie ethos as much as anyone, he wanted to make money, especially in light of Lenny Hart's betrayal. In March, 1970, Lenny disappeared, taking $155,000 of the band's money with him. That included Warner's $75,000 advance and monies the band had made from their constant touring. Just like that, the Grateful Dead were broke. Hart was eventually found by a private detective and arrested in San Diego on July 26, 1971. He was sentenced to six months in jail and the band managed to recover $63,000 of the missing money. Lenny died from natural causes on February 2, 1975.

At that point, the band promoted Jon McIntire to manage the band with Scully continuing to handle promotion activities. They then hit the road. The band began 1970 with a three night stand at the Fillmore East, followed by a three night stand at The Warehouse in New Orleans later that month. While in New Orleans, they were raided by police and arrested for drug possession at 3:30 am on January 31. Nineteen members of the band and their entourage were arrested, handcuffed, and sent off to the jailhouse. They wound up in jail for eight hours but were bailed out in time for their show that night They were so broke at this point that they decided to play an extra night at the Warehouse on February 1 so that they pay back their bail money.

After this incident, Constanten left the band, reportedly upset that he was undermixed but more likely unnerved by the arrest. He was not replaced by the time they hit the studio in February to begin work on their next studio album.

This time around, they were determined to record the new album in less than two weeks. Hunter had been traveling with them on the road and writing new songs with Garcia, which were ready to be recorded. Garcia had decided to take the music in a more folk rock direction and Hunter's lyrics fit in perfectly. Their template for the album was to emulate the Bakersfield sound, pioneered by country and western star Wynn Stewart and perfected by Buck Owens and Merle Haggard. Garcia had bought a pedal steel guitar during a 1969 tour stop in Colorado and was determined to use it.

The group recorded *Workingman's Dead* (#27-1970) in February, 1970. It was released on June 14 and made the American pop albums chart immediately. It was the perfect album for the right time and it soared up to number 27 during a twenty six week chart run. It was also their first recording to chart in England, peaking at number 69 during a two week chart run. The album contained two Dead classics, "Uncle John's Band" (#69-1970) and "Casey Jones". The first was released as a single and made the U.S. pop singles chart, peaking at number 69. The second became a FM station standard.

In October, 1970, a vintage live recording from late 1966 called *Vintage Dead* (#127-1970) was released by the MGM subsidiary, Sunflower Records, with the approval or cooperation of the band. It turned out that a small label called Together Records had assembled live recordings of various Bay Area bands for a planned compilation. However, the label collapsed before they could put the album together. MGM, who had rejected the Dead in 1966 before they signed with Warner Brothers, purchased the recordings and

released them on Sunflower. The album made the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 127 during a ten week chart run.

Sunflower also released an Avalon live recording from the same time period in June, 1971 as *Historic Dead* (#154-1971). Once again, it made the lower reaches of the American pop albums chart, hitting number 154 during a seven week chart run. These would be the only two Grateful Dead albums released on Sunflower.

In between the two legacy live recordings, the band released their second studio album of 1970, *American Beauty* (#30-1970) on November 1, 1970. It also made the American pop albums chart in short order and climbed to number 30 during a nineteen week chart run. It did even better in England, reaching number 27 during a two week chart run. It included another U.S. pop chart single, "Truckin'" (#64-1970), which chronicled their New Orleans drug bust.

Workingman's Dead and *American Beauty* would be certified gold in 1974 and would eventually hit platinum sales, with the later certified double platinum. Sales from the albums helped reduce their debt and gave them unprecedented radio exposure. They were commercially viable from both a recording and a touring standpoint.

The year also turned out to be busy from a concert standpoint. Despite taking time to record both studio albums, the group still played close to 140 shows. While many of those shows were at the usual venues like the two Fillmore's, the Family Dog, and Winterland, they began to play larger venues outside of San Francisco as the records sold. In May, they traveled to England for the first time to play in the Hollywood Music Festival in Staffordshire, England on May 23 and 24. Their performance was filmed and eventually released in 2010.

They also participated in the Transcontinental Pop Festival in late June and early July in Canada. Traveling between cities by train, the band played shows in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Calgary with several other notable bands, including Janis Joplin and The Band. The bands traveled between cities on a 14 car chartered Canadian National Railways train, with the entire trip and shows filmed for a documentary. The Dead were featured twice in the film and three times on the soundtrack.

Just after leaving Canada, the band played the Mississippi River Festival then stayed busy through the remainder of the year. They closed it with a New Year's Eve show at Winterland. For most of the year, the band toured as a six piece, with McKernan handling all keyboard responsibilities. However, that did not really work out well. While McKernan had taken organ lessons in an attempt to become more useful when Constanten joined the band, he was not musically adept enough to keep up with the band's ever demanding music.

He only contributed instrumentation to two tracks on *Workingman's Dead* and the keyboard work on *American Beauty* was handled by Garcia, Lesh, and session players Howard Wales and Ned Lagin. He was also the one core member of the band who did not use psychedelics or drugs, preferring to drink, which he did constantly.

The other band member who was struggling was Hart. Despondent over his father's actions, the drummer became increasingly depressed as 1970 proceeded and his father remained on the run. He blamed himself for bringing Lenny into the band's world and had turned to heroin and other drugs to help him cope. It was clear by the beginning of 1971 that his playing had deteriorated to the point where he was negatively

affecting the band's live performances. As such, he left the group via mutual consent in February, 1971. He was not replaced.

Now down to Garcia, Weir, Lesh, McKernan, and Kreutzmann, the band continued to tour, with no plans for an immediate studio album. In March and April, they taped some shows and compiled them on *Grateful Dead* (#25-1971), which was released on October 24, 1971. It contained three new songs, including their iconic versions of "Bertha" and "Playing In The Band". The closing medley of "Not Fade Away" and "Goin' Down The Road" quickly became a fan favorite. The album contained a number of studio overdubs. Both lead and background vocals were overdubbed, and Merl Saunders was hired to overdub organ parts on three songs.

The album entered the American pop albums chart immediately and rose to number 25 during a twelve week chart run. It was their first recording to be certified gold in America, reaching 500,000 in sales in November, 1971. Fans frequently refer to the set as *Grateful Dead: Skull & Roses*, to distinguish it from their debut album. Band members still refer to it as their original, but rejected, title, *Skull Fuck*.

It was on this album that the band first acknowledged their growing base of steady fans, the Deadheads. On the back sleeve, they wrote "Dead Freaks Unite: Who are you? Where are you? How are you? Send us your name and address and we'll keep you informed. Dead Heads, P.O. Box 1065, San Rafael, California 94901". The phenomenon was first mentioned in the press by Village Voice music critic, Robert Christgau, who noticed a number of "regulars" at a Felt Forum show in 1971. The band, even Intune to the needs of their audience, put an employee, Eileen Law, in charge of the mailing list and the Dead Heads newsletter.

By the end of 1971, there were 350 registered fans, but that number significantly went up. Law sent out the first Newsletter in October, 1971 and would publish 24 more up to February, 1980. By that point, the registered Deadheads number 40,000.

While the Dead played less aggregate shows in 1971 than previous years, they were now booked into larger venues. In August, 1971, McKernan's health began to seriously decline. He began to suffer from the effects of congenital primary biliary cholangitis, which was an auto immune disease of the liver, which is not related to drinking. One of the common symptoms is extreme fatigue. He was hospitalized in August, 1971 and was not able to resume touring until December of the same year.

Fortunately, at the same time, Keith and Donna Godchaux had introduced themselves to Garcia after another show in August. Keith Godchaux (born Keith Richard Godchaux on July 19, 1948 in Seattle, Washington) had been playing piano since he was a child. His father was a semi professional musician. He eventually focused on Dixieland jazz music, playing professionally in country club bands and Dixieland ensembles. He soon found himself playing cocktail standards like "Misty" but wanted to do something more serious.

In November, 1970 he met Donna Jean Thatcher (born August 22, 1947 in Florence, Alabama). She sang from the time she was little and became a session singer at the famous Muscle Shoals Studio in Alabama. She provided backup vocals for a variety of successful artists, including Percy Sledge, Elvis Presley, Boz Scaggs, Cher, Joe Tex, Neil Diamond, and Duane Allman. She also was a member of Southern Comfort. Thatcher moved to California in the summer of 1970 and fell in love with Godchaux. The two were married in November, 1970.

In 1970, Garcia started to play solo shows with Merl Saunders. He also played pedal steel guitar with the New Riders Of The Purple Sage, which also included John Dawson, David Nelson, Bob Matthews, and Mickey Hart. The guitarist's earliest shows with Saunders centered around the Keystone Korner Club in Berkeley. The two had been playing at The Matrix, but it closed in the spring of 1971, forcing them to find a new spot. They played there 20 times during the year. At a show in August/September, Donna Godchaux introduced her husband to Garcia. The Dead had taken a hiatus in late August due to McKernan's illness but had a series of shows booked from October through the end of the year. When Garcia met the Godchaux's, he must have felt that divine intervention had dropped them into his lap.

He immediately arranged an audition but only Kreutzmann was in town. However, the two were instantly impressed with Keith's piano work and he joined the band in time for the October tour. His first show was on October 19 at the University Of Minnesota's Northrup Auditorium. During that first tour, he played upright piano and Hammond organ. He quickly filled in, having an innate ability to fill the spaces between the main musicians' parts. He also could improvise on the spot, a requirement to play with the band.

The tour continued through the end of the year, with the band largely playing venues in the Midwest, Texas, and the East and West Coasts. McKernan returned in December and played with Godchaux into mid-1972, focusing on harmonica, percussion, and organ, which freed Godchaux to focus on piano. After closing 1971 with a New Year's Eve show at Winterland, the band took a two month break from touring. During this period, they officially added Donna Godchaux to the lineup as a backup vocalist.

They returned in early March with another show at Winterland, then played a seven night stand at the Academy Of Music in NYC in late March. On April 7, they began their famous tour of Europe with a show at Wembley Empire Pool in London. The 1972 tour of Europe included 22 shows through May 26, 1972 and yielded their most accomplished live album, *Europe '72* (#24-1972), which was released on November 5, 1972.

The album consisted of 17 songs over three vinyl albums. The 17 songs came from eight shows in Denmark, England, and Paris. Many of the songs were new and would not subsequently appear on any studio album. Like their previous live recording, some of the vocals were later overdubbed in the studio. Regardless, it was an immediate hit and is commonly viewed as their masterpiece. It entered the American pop albums chart immediately and climbed to number 24 during a twenty four week chart run. It also yielded their fourth U.S. pop chart single, a live version of "Sugar Magnolia" (#91-1972), which peaked at number 91.

The album was certified gold in the States on December 14, 1972, becoming the first triple album to ever earn that honor. It was later certified double platinum in August, 2001, making it one of the band's best sellers.

The band returned to the States with a June 17 show at the Hollywood Bowl in Los Angeles. It was the last time that they played with McKernan. He knew he was dying and broke off all connections with the band. He passed away from a gastrointestinal hemorrhage on March 8, 1973. Understandably, the other members were devastated when he died. Garcia spoke at his funeral, declaring that his death was the end of the original Grateful Dead.

After McKernan left, the band continued to tour through the end of the year. They were keenly interested in finally extracting themselves from their Warner Brothers contract and had delivered two studio albums, a double live album, and a triple live album since the revision was signed by Lenny Hart in late 1969. The

revised contract called for seven albums. The band members thought the triple set completed their obligation but were informed by Warner that they only considered it to be a double album. That meant they were one album short. They came up with a novel way to address that situation.

Owsley Stanley had just been released from prison in the summer of 1972 and was having difficulty reintegrating himself with the band. Things escalated to physical violence in October, 1972, which caused the band members to throw him off the tour. To give him something to do, they gave him the task of compiling the last album owed to Warner. They only stipulated that it was to be a live recording and gave him free reign to decide which show he wanted to release.

Stanley decided to release a recording of the band's four show stand at the Fillmore East in February, 1970. He further decided to focus on recordings featuring McKernan, who was near death. The new album, *History Of The Grateful Dead, Volume One (Bear's Choice)* (#60-1973), was released on July 13, 1973. It immediately made the American pop albums chart and reached number 60 during an eleven week chart run. McKernan sings lead on three of the seven tracks. Only one original song, "Black Peter" is included.

Now free from Warner, the band made a bold decision and instead of signing with one of the labels who had been courting them, they formed their own record label, Grateful Dead Records. They then hired Ron Rakow, who would prove to be yet another shady character, to run it. They wound up releasing four albums on the label, beginning with the studio set, *Wake Of The Flood* (#18-1973), which hit the record shelves on October 15, 1973. It was recorded in early August. It immediately made the American pop albums chart, rising to number 18 during a nineteen week chart run.

Without question, the Grateful Dead became one of rock's biggest bands in 1973. By this point, they had developed a massive sound system. The band hit the road in early February and played nearly 75 shows. The highlight came on July 28, when they played in front of 600,000 people at Watkins Glen with The Band and The Allman Brothers Band. The concert was set up by Shelly Finkel and Jim Koplik, two promoters who had organized a successful Dead show in Hartford, Connecticut the previous year.

During that show, three members of the Allman Brothers had joined the Dead onstage during an impromptu jam, setting the stage for the two touring giants to work together. The two promoters decided to stage an even bigger concert and added another iconic group, The Band, to the lineup. They secured the Watkins Glen Raceway and set the show for July 28.

History repeated itself when it soon became apparent that the show was going to be massive. There was a five to eight mile traffic jam going to the racetrack, forcing everyone to abandon their vehicles and walk to the site. Finkel and Koplik had sold 150,000 tickets at ten dollars each, but 600,000 people showed up and those without tickets were let in for free. The crowd was so massive that the Dead's sound engineers set up an innovative system of speaker towers in the audience that were synchronized via electronic delays to the sound coming from the stage. Every one of the 600,000 people heard the same exact thing at the same exact time.

The three bands arrived at the site on July 27. Robbie Robertson wanted to do a soundcheck but there was already a massive crowd present on site. The decision was made to go ahead and The Band wound up playing a few songs to the delighted crowd. The Allman Brothers followed with two songs before the Dead did a two set marathon that included many of their best known songs. On July 28, the Dead played first, performing two long sets. The Band then played a two hour single set, followed by the Allman Brothers'

three hour set. Members of all three bands then did a hour encore jam. As was the case at Woodstock, there was a mid-set thunderstorm during The Band's set.

After Watkins Glen, the Dead played arenas and stadiums through the end of the year. They took a break for the Holidays, then resumed touring with a three night stand at Winterland in late February, 1974. At that point, Warner Brothers released their first compilation, *Skeltons from the Closet: The Best Of The Grateful Dead* (#75-1974). It was released with the band's permission, as Ice Nine owned the publishing rights to all the songs. The album immediately entered the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 75 during an initial ten week chart run. However, it became a steady seller and was certified gold in 1980, platinum in 1986, and double/triple platinum in 1994 and 1995. In 2018, it hit the four million sales mark and is the group's bestselling album.

Just after the compilation hit the streets, the band members entered the studio to record their seventh studio album, *From The Mars Hotel* (#16-1974). It was released on June 27 and immediately made the American pop albums chart, rising to number 16 during a twenty week chart run. It also hit number 47 in England. The band started their support tour in May and played through early August, when they took an one month break before heading to Europe in September for 7 shows. Once they returned to the States, they played a handful of shows, culminating with an October 20, 1974 show at Winterland.

By the time they returned from Europe, Garcia was exhausted and suggested that the band take an hiatus. They booked Winterland in San Francisco for a five night stand in late October, during which time they planned to film a movie. The movie could then serve as a tour substitute during their break, which at no time frame. Rakow also sold United Artists on the idea of a soundtrack album.

The film was made by director Leon Gast, who used six cameras and two 16 track recorders. It then became a white whale, particularly for Garcia, who wanted to oversee all aspects of pos production, driving Gast from the project. Editing, assembly, and synchronization took three years, nearly bankrupting the band in the process. To pay for the film, the band took out loans, signed a distribution deal with United Artists, and self-released a series of albums.

During 1974, the band unveiled their Wall Of Sound, which included 604 speakers driven by 26,000 watts of power. That was the equivalent of 260 Marshall Heads. It took 21 members of their road crew twelve hours to assemble the system at each show and required four tractor trailers to move it. Because of the length of time to put it together and tear it apart, the band had three sets of scaffolding. While the system was in use at one venue, the scaffolding crew was already at the next venue setting up for the next show. The system was so powerful that the delay units and audience based speaker towers used the previous year were not needed.

By the time the band played Winterland, they were overwhelmed by the sheer excess of the system. It cost them $100,000 a month just to move it and the long set up and take down timeframes had caused problems with their road crews. In addition, the band members were exhausted and made the unprecedented decision to take a hiatus. They did not play any more shows for the rest of 1974 and would never use the Wall Of Sound again when they resumed touring in 1976.

In February, 1975, the band members returned to the studio to record their next album. Mickey Hart had returned to the band for the last Winterland show on October 20, 1974, much to the initial chagrin of Kreutzmann, who did not want him back, and was invited to the sessions by Garcia and Lesh. While away

from the Dead, Hart had released one solo album, *Rolling Thunder* (1972), built a home studio, and recorded two other albums that had been rejected by Warner Brothers.

Various band members also used his recording studio for their own solo projects. Earlier that same month, he had buried his father on February 2, 1975, showing up briefly at the funeral parlor, cleared the room and played a rudimental drum piece, "The Downfall Of Paris", on his coffin before immediately leaving.

The band finished their new album, *Blues For Allah* (#12-1975), in early May and released it on September 1, 1975. During this period, they played two benefit shows as Jerry Garcia & Friends but then played an intimate show at The Great American Music Hall on August 13 as The Grateful Dead. The album was their highest charter to date, reaching number 12 on the American pop music albums chart during a thirteen week chart run in the fall/winter. It also peaked at number 45 in England.

On September 28, the group played a free show at Golden Gate Park, again billed as Jerry Garcia & Friends. They would not take the stage again until early June, 1976. Many Grateful Dead historians count 1975 as a signature year in the band's history. No fewer than four members were struggling with drugs, with Garcia turning to heroin, in part because of the continual pressure related to the Grateful Dead movie, which still wasn't finished. Hart had returned but Kreutzmann, who was struggling with opiates, took a while to welcome him back.

In June, 1976, the band went out on tour. They played 41 shows that year, ranging from stadiums to multi night runs at theaters. During the tour, they released a new live album, *Steal Your Face* (#56-1976), on June 26. It was taken from the Winterland October, 1974 stand that was filmed for the movie. It made the American pop albums chart immediately and hit number 56 during a nine week chart run. It also peaked at number 42 in England. It would be the last album released on Grateful Dead Records.

In late 1976, the band gave up on their label due to the management headaches associated with running it and negotiated a new record contract with Arista, which was being run by their old friend, Clive Davis. They entered the studio in November, 1976 to begin work on their next studio album. *Terrapin Station* (#28-1977) was released on July 27, 1977 and featured a decidedly more jazz influenced progressive rock sound. It was a hit, rising to number 28 during a sixteen week chart run in late summer/fall. It peaked at number 43 in England. The album would be certified gold in the States in September, 1987.

While recording the album, the band continued to tour, playing numerous shows from late February through the beginning of June, when Hart was injured in an auto accident and could not tour. The band cancelled their planned summer tour with Garcia focusing on the release of *The Grateful Dead Movie*, which finally premiered on June 1, 1977. The band resumed touring in September and played numerous shows through the end of the year in support of the album. They ended the year with another multi night stand in late December at Winterland. Many music historians consider the 1977 concerts to be the best performed of the band's career.

On August 18, 1977, Warner released a second compilation, *What A Long Strange Trip It's Been* (#121-1977). It was another success, reaching number 121 on the American pop albums chart during an eight week chart run. Like the first compilation, it has been a steady seller over the years. It was certified platinum in August, 2001.

The band's next studio album, *Shakedown Street* (#41-1978), was released on November 15, 1978. It was produced by Lowell George of Little Feat, along with John Kahn. As with all their albums, it made the American pop albums chart immediately and rose to number 41 during a nineteen week chart run. It was certified gold in the States in September, 1987. For the first time in their career, the album was heavily criticized by critics, who felt that the group was adopting a disco like feel in some of their songs. However, their fans still bought it and went to their live shows as always.

The group ratcheted up their touring in 1978, playing 81 shows. During the year, the band became intrigued with the idea of playing live shows in Egypt. The idea had come as a result of a vacation in the country by Richard Loren, who had taken over the management of the band from McIntre in late 1974 after successfully organizing the 1974 tour. The shows were put together by Loren, Lesh, and Alan Trist, who met and cleared the plan with Egyptian government officials. The band rented the Who's sound system for the shows.

The first show took place on September 14 and was recorded. They played at an open air theater on the east side of Sphinx. During the third and final show on September 16, there was a total lunar eclipse, adding drama to the show itself. In the end, proceeds from the shows were donated to the Department of Antiquities and a charity. The band planned to release a triple live album to document the shows, but the performance was marred by musical and technical problems. In the end, the group lost $500,000 on the three shows.

The band continued to tour through the beginning of 1979 but were soon at another crossroads. Keith Godchaux had become addicted to heroin and alcohol with his playing suffering. By 1978, he was not playing well and frequently fighting with his wife, Donna, who had developed a drinking problem of her own and was frequently off key while singing. After a February 17, 1979 benefit show in Oakland, the band called a meeting, and everyone agreed that the couple should leave. As it turned out, the band already had picked Keith's replacement. The Godchaux's took some time off, then formed a new band, The Heart Of Gold Band. On July 23, 1980, Keith was killed in an auto accident four days after his 32nd birthday.

Brent Mydland (born October 21, 1952 in Munich, Germany) had been playing in the Bob Weir Band for a year and was perfect. While born in Germany, he had been raised in California and began playing the piano at the age of 6. He took formal classical lessons through his junior year in high school. He also played trumpet and accordion. After high school, he played in a series of bands, including Batdorf & Rodney and Silver. He joined the Bob Weir Band in 1978 to tour behind Weir's solo album, *Heaven Help The Fool* (1978).

Mydland rehearsed with the band for two weeks, then played his first live show with them on April 22 in San Jose, CA. He immediately fit in like a glove. In addition to his keyboard work, he was a great singer, with a tenor that fit perfectly with Garcia and Weir. He was also a solid songwriter. The band played 54 shows with him through the end of 1979.

On April 28, 1980, the band released a new studio album, *Go To Heaven* (#23-1980). It rose to number 23 on the American pop albums chart during a 21 week chart run in the spring/summer of 1980. It yielded the rare U.S. pop chart single, "Alabama Getaway" (#68-1980). Sales were somewhat hampered by the cover art, which showed the band members in white suits against a white backdrop, reminding viewers of disco, even though the album contained hardnosed blues rock. Like their previous studio album, the record was savaged by critics, many of whom felt that the group had gone commercial and lost their edge. They would not release another studio album for seven years.

The band toured extensively once again in 1980, playing close to 90 shows. They appeared on *Saturday Night Live* on April 5, playing "Alabama Getaway" and "Saint of Circumstance". During the tour, they played multi night stands in the same venues, including 15 nights at The Warfield Theatre in San Francisco and 8 nights at Radio City Music Hall in NYC to celebrate their 15th anniversary as a band. During those two stands, the band played acoustic sets for the first time in a decade.

Material from the acoustic sets was released as *Reckoning* (#43-1981) on April 1, 1981. It reached number 43 on the American pop albums chart during a sixteen week chart run. Material from the electric portion of the show was released on *Dead Set* (#29-1981), which followed on August 26, 1981. It peaked at number 29 during an eleven week chart run.

In 1981, Loren resigned from managing the band and was replaced by Rifkin. He would in turn be replaced by McIntre in 1984. The band made several changes over the next couple of years, again to make things easier for their now massive fan base. In 1982, they opened their own 40 person ticketing agency, which typically moved 50% of their concert ticket sales well in advance of the show. The following year, they installed a hotline for their fans and in 1984 provided separate taping areas at all of their shows.

The Grateful Dead did not release any recordings between 1981 and 1987, focusing on touring. They played anywhere from 60 to 80 shows a year through 1985. However, the years were drama filled, mostly as a result of Garcia's heavy drug addiction to cocaine and heroin. In 1984, Rock Scully was booted out of the Grateful Dead organization, in part because of his enabling of Jerry's drug use. Things reached a head in January, 1985 when the band staged an intervention.

By this point, the guitarist had developed edemas on his legs and feet that were so large that he could barely walk. His voice had changed because of the years of heavy smoking and he had no stamina, barely able to get through shows. He knew he was doing permanent damage to his body and agreed to enter a rehab facility in Oakland, CA.

On January 18, The night before he was scheduled to enter rehab, Garcia was arrested outside of Golden Gate Park for narcotics possession. He was allowed to enter rehab and gradually began to ween himself off narcotics as 1985 progressed. By the spring of 1986, he was clean, aided in the long journey by a friend, Nora Sage, who encouraged him to paint and draw once again. The band toured heavily in the first part of 1986, culminating with two shows at JFK Stadium in Washington, D.C. on July 6 and 7th. Garcia was fighting a tooth infection but was putting off seeing a dentist until a tour break. The combination of the infection, his high weight, his sugar intensive diet, and renewed drug use sent him into a diabetic coma on July 10.

The guitarist was rushed to the hospital, where he remained in the coma for five days. When he finally emerged, he found that he had lost some of his motor functions, including those associated with playing the guitar. His longtime friend, Merle Saunders, painstakingly worked with him, essentially teaching him how to play guitar once again. In the fall, Garcia played some low key shows with the Jerry Garcia Band at a club in San Francisco, followed by a Halloween performance at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center in Oakland. On December 15, he rejoined the Dead for a three night stand of shows at the Oakland Coliseum. The band then performed a four night stand at the Henry J. Kaiser Convention Center to close out the year.

Having kicked drugs, lost weight, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle, Garcia had a renewed burst of energy in early 1987. On January 6, 1987, the band entered the studio in San Rafael, CA and recorded a

new studio album, *In The Dark* (#6-1987), in seven days. Nearly all the songs that would be on the album had been part of their live repertoire since 1982 and 1983. The band members knew inside and out and decided to record them in a pseudo live setting. They rented the Marin Veterans Memorial Auditorium and set up the stage like a live show. While there was no audience present, they recorded the material on the stage under concert conditions. It forced them to focus more and the result was a masterpiece.

The band returned to the road in late January through May, before taking a month off to rest for their summer tour. They returned to the road in June and the album was released on July 6, 1987. The album immediately made the American pop albums chart and would rise to number 6 during a 34 week chart run. The lead single, "Touch Of Grey" (#9-1987), would become their only U.S. pop chart top forty single. It cracked the top forty in mid-August and peaked at number 9 during a nine week top forty chart run. The Garcia/Hunter composition had been in their live setlist as early as September, 1982. The accompanying video was played constantly on MTV. The album peaked at number 57 in England and was certified platinum in the States by September, 1987. It has since been certified double platinum in August, 1995.

In July, the band teamed with Bob Dylan for six stadium shows, before the Dead went off on their own, maintaining a frenetic tour schedule through early October. They finished the year with a series of shows in the Bay Area in November and four consecutive nights at the Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum to ring in the New Year. In late 1987, Arista combined all six albums that the band had released for them in a single box set called *Dead Zone: The Grateful Dead CD Collection (1977-1987)*. The group spent 1988 on the road, playing 81 shows throughout North America, including two multi night stands at Madison Square Garden.

The band recorded the stadium shows with Bob Dylan and the two artists decided to release a live album based on them on February 6, 1989. *Dylan & the Dead* (#37-1989) immediately made the American pop albums chart and reached number 37 during an eleven week chart run. It was their last album to chart in England, peaking at number 38. Despite receiving scathing reviews, the album was certified gold in the States in August, 1989. The Dead also played nearly 75 shows in 1989.

In The Dark had been the last record owed under the band's first contract with Arista Records. Of all the artists on the label's artist stable, the Dead gave them rock and roll credibility. As such, they made every effort to retain the band. The label had to deal with a band that was holding all the cards. Their new business manager, Nancy Mallonee, had been hired in 1986 to restore some order, including getting their tax returns up to date. She did just that and 1987 had proved to be an extremely profitable year. The band made nearly 27 million dollars off of touring alone, with their mail order ticket sales hitting 450,000 tickets. They were so popular that some promoters did not even have to advertise their shows because they would sell out on word of mouth.

Of course, Arista knew all this and took an attitude that they would do anything to sign the band. The Dead sent their lawyer, Hal Kant, to negotiate and he wound up getting them a $3.50 per CD royalty rate, almost unheard of within the industry. He also included language in regard to their plan to release live albums on their own label that had been compiled by their in house archivist, Dick Latvala. While Arista Executives did not like the idea, they agreed as long as they only printed 25,000 copies per album.

With the new contract in place, the band returned to the studio in February, 1989 to begin work on a new studio album. Working around their touring commitments, *Built To Last* (#27-1989), was completed in late October and released on October 31, 1989. It immediately made the American pop albums chart and rose to number 27 during a fifteen week chart run. It was certified gold in January, 1990.

The band hit the road once again in support in early 1990. By this point, they had touring down to an art. They played 74 shows broken into spring, summer, and fall legs. They ended the year with four shows at Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum. They also did an European/England 11 show leg in October which ended with three nights at Wembley Arena in London. However, the year was marked by yet another tragedy within the band.

After completing the summer leg with a show in Illinois on July 23, 1990, Mydland returned to his home in Lafayette, California. On July 26, he was found dead in his home, having passed away from acute cocaine and narcotic intoxication. He had lethal levels of cocaine and morphine in his body. The band members, especially Garcia, were crushed by his death. With tour commitments on the horizon, they had to find his replacement while dealing with their grief. In the end, they hired Vince Welnick (born February 21, 1951 in Phoenix, Arizona). He was most known for being a founding member of The Tubes.

Welnick made his live debut on September 7, 1990 at the Richfield Coliseum in Richfield, Ohio. During this period, the band also relied on Bruce Hornsby (born Bruce Randall Hornsby on November 23, 1954 in Williamsburg, Virginia) to join them as a guest artist on grand piano. The famous singer/pianist had first played some shows with the Dead in 1988 as a guest on accordion or synthesizer. He became a close friend of Garcia, with the two continually pushing each other musically. In the fall of 1990, he played piano and accordion. He would continue to do this on a fairly steady basis until March, 1992, but did still it up to Garcia's death. In total, Hornsby played over 100 concerts with the Grateful Dead.

In September, 1990, Arista released a live album, *Without A Net* (#43-1990). It contained recordings from October, 1989 through April, 1990, catching the last run of shows with Mydland. It made the American pop albums chart immediately and climbed to number 43 during a twelve week chart run. It was certified gold in America in November, 1990. Touring continued in 1991, with 78 shows played. Garcia was exhausted but knew that the band was now 80 to 90% dependent on tour revenues to meet the now massive payroll. As a result, he started to use heroin and cocaine once again.

During the first half of 1992, the pace continued. They had played 46 shows through July 1 when Garcia was hospitalized once again. He was nursed back to health by his family and was on stage once again by December 2. During his recovery, he reduced his smoking, lost some weight, and became a vegetarian to regain his health. But, the stress of the continual touring and his responsibilities as the de facto leader of the band weighed heavily on him. The band played nine more shows to finish the year, then maintained a torrid pace through 1993, with 82 shows, followed by 85 more in 1994. Not surprisingly, he started using drugs once again to cope.

The crazy pace continued in 1995. By July 9, the band had already played 47 shows when they left the stage at Soldier Field in Chicago. Garcia was in such bad shape that he could no longer play the guitar without considerable pain, caused by a loss of feeling in his hands and fingers. He also developed carpal tunnel syndrome and was forgetting what song the band was playing when he was on stage. He knew that the end was near but was determined to go down fighting.

He checked himself into the Betty Ford Clinic just after that show and stayed for two weeks. He was then transferred into the Serenity Knolls Treatment Center in Forest Knolls, California. On August 9, just eight days after his 53rd birthday, he was found dead in his room from a massive heart attack. He was buried on August 12. The following day, approximately 25,000 people attended a public memorial at Golden Gate Park. The band broke up by the end of 1995. While the continual touring in the nineties certainly

contributed, and maybe caused their leader's death, it was extremely profitable. The Grateful Dead generated 285 million dollars in revenue in those five and one half years.

While Garcia was still alive, the band began to understand the commercial sales potential of their vast catalog of legacy live recordings. In 1991, they had released a new live album, *One From The Vault* (#106-1991), on April 15, 1991. It contained the entire August 13, 1975 impromptu concert from the Great American Music Hall in San Francisco. The impetus behind this release was recording engineer Dan Healy, who knew that there were bootlegs covering this same show. The group resurrected Grateful Dead Records for the release, which made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart, reaching number 106.

They followed in May, 1992 with *Two From The Vault* (#119-1992), which was recorded at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles on August 24, 1968. It also made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart, peaking at number 119. The fact that both albums charted despite the 25,000 copy restriction imposed by Arista, opened the band member's eyes to the potential of releasing legacy live recordings. They would turn that into a very lucrative business.

In the wake of Garcia's death, several new live recordings were released that charted. *Hundred Year Hall* (#26-1996), was released less than two months after his death. It immediately made the American pop albums chart and peaked at number 26 during a thirteen week chart run. It captured an April 26, 1972 concert in Frankfurt, Germany. It was certified gold in the States in January, 1997. *Dozin' At The Knick* (#74-1996) was released one month later. It also immediately made the American pop albums chart and peaked at number 74 during a four week chart run. It captured three shows in March, 1990 show in Albany, New York. It was certified gold in the States in March, 2000. Both albums were released by Grateful Dead Records.

Fallout From The Phil Zone (#83-1997) was released in June, 1997. It also made the American pop albums chart quickly, hitting number 83 during a three week chart run. It contained live material recorded from 1967 through 1995, with all tracks personally selected by Phil Lesh. *Live At The Fillmore East 2-11-69* (#77-1997) was released in October, 1997. It reached number 77 on the American pop albums chart during a two week chart run in November. *Ladies and Gentlemen…the Grateful Dead* (#165-2000) reached the American pop albums chart upon release in October, 2000, peaking at number 165 during a two week chart run. It was certified gold in the U.S. in January, 2002.

In 2002, three more legacy live recordings made the American pop albums chart. *Night Of Diamonds* (#196-2001) captured an October 16, 1989 show in New Jersey. *Postcards Of The Hanging* (#120-2002) included live recordings from 1973 through 1990. *Steppin' Out With The Grateful Dead: England '72* (#160-2002) captured a series of British shows between April 7 and May 26 in 1972. They peaked at numbers 196, 120, and 160 respectively.

Grateful Dead Records would continue to release chart legacy live recordings outside of their special promotions for years. *Rockin' The Rhein with the Grateful Dead* (#75-2004) captured an April 24, 1972 show in West Germany. *Truckin' Up To Buffalo* (#137-2005) captured a July 4, 1989 show in Buffalo. *Live At The Cow Palace* (#48-2007) featured a December 31, 1976 show in Daly City, California. *Three From The Vault* (#112-2007) captured a February 19, 1971 show in Port Chester, NY. *Rocking The Cradle: Egypt 1978* (#35-2008) captured two of their famous shows in Egypt in 1978. *To Terrapin: Hartford '77* (#59-2009) documented a May 28, 1977 show in Harford, Connecticut.

On September 1, 2011, the band teamed with Rhino to released *Europe'72: The Complete Recordings* (#193-2011). It contains complete recordings of all 22 shows of that tour over 73 CDs. While one would not think there would be much of a demand for such an expensive set, all 7200 copies that were initially printed sold out within four days. Subsequently, more copies were printed and distributed. The set was certified gold in the States upon release.

The band mined the 1972 European tour one more time later that same year with *Europe 72 Volume 2* (#72-2011). This set included 20 more songs from the same tour that were selected by David Lemieux that were not included on the original *Europe '72* triple album set. Not surprisingly, it reached number 72 on the American pop albums chart.

Incredibly, the band continued to make the American pop albums chart with legacy live recordings after 2011. *Spring 1990: So Glad You Made It* (#157-2012) included material recorded from March 16 to April 2, 1990. *Sunshine Daydream* (#19-2013) captured an August 27, 1972 show in Veneta, Oregon. *30 Trips Around The Sun: The Definitive Live Story 1965-1995*, (#161-2015) includes one song from every year that they toured, captured on four discs. *July 1978: The Complete Recordings* (#62-2016) includes recordings from July, 1978. *Red Rocks: 7/8/78* (#177-2016) features a July 8, 1978 show from the famous amphitheater in Colorado. All of these albums were released on Rhino.

More Rhino sets continued to make the American pop albums chart through the present. They include *May 1977: Get Shown The Light* (#33-2017), which was recorded in May, 1977. *Cornell 5/8/77* (#25-2017) captures a single show on that date. *Robert F. Kennedy Stadium, Washington D.C., July 12 & 13, 1989* (#64-2017) was recorded on July 12 and 13, 1989 in Washington D.C. *Pacific Northwest '73-'74: Believe It If You Need It* (#88-2018), was recorded in 1973 and 1974. *The Warfield, San Francisco, California, October 9 & 10, 1980* (#84-2019) is as described. *Giants Stadium 1987, 1989, 1991* (#118-2019) is also as described. Finally, *Ready Or Not* (#172-2019), was recorded between June 23, 1992 and April 2, 1995. Once again, all of these sets were released on Rhino Records.

The band has also placed some boxsets on the American pop albums chart. *So Many Roads (1965-1995)* (#170-1999) was released on November 7, 1999. It rose to number 170 during a single one week chart run and was certified gold in the States in April, 2000. It includes five CDs of mostly live recordings from throughout the band's entire career. Rhino also scored with a box set, *The Golden Road (1965-1973)* (#191-2003). It made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart and was certified gold in the States in November, 2001.

In addition to these sets, Arista released a new compilation, *The Arista Years* (#95-1996), on October 15, 1996. It cracked the American pop albums chart for two weeks in November, rising to number 95. Only one other compilation would chart after Garcia's death. Rhino's *The Very Best Of Grateful Dead* (#69-2003), hit number 69 on the American pop albums chart in 2003. It was certified gold in America in February, 2013. Finally, *The Best Of The Grateful Dead Live* (#167-2018), peaked at number 167 in 2018.

While the band would continue to release high quality live recordings through Grateful Dead Records and Rhino, they also determined that they had a market with lower fidelity live recordings in their concert vault. On October 31, 1993, the band released *Dick's Picks Volume* 1 (1993). The collection was named after their archivist, Dick Latvala. He selected the shows from their vast tape vault and oversaw productions of the albums until he died in 1999. At that point, David Lemieux took over and continued to release sets under the same title until 2005. In total, there were 36 sets released as part of this project. All of the sets are based on two track concert recordings and as such, are not of the same quality as other Grateful Dead

live recordings. They were also released in limited quantities and none of them made the American pop albums chart.

In May, 2005, the band began to sell digital downloads via their online store. Twelve volumes were released through April, 2006. For some reason, two other sets, *Road Trips Full Show: Spectrum 11/5/79* and *Road Trips Full Show: Spectrum 11/6/79*, were released under this same format in 2008. While you can no longer purchase them through the Dead's online store, they are now available via iTunes, Amazon, and Nugs.net.

In November, 2007, the band debuted their *Road Trips* series. They were released on Grateful Dead Records but distributed by Rhino via a ten year contract they signed with the band. Unlike the previous archival releases, some of the Road Trips recordings featured recordings from multiple shows during a defined period of time. Others are full single concert recordings. Seventeen of these sets were released through November, 2011. Three of them made the American pop albums chart, including *Vol. 4 No. 2: April Fools '88* (#144-2011), *Vol. 4 No. 4:Spectrum 4-6-82* (#95-2011), and *Vol. 4 No. 5: Boston Music Hall 6-9-76* (#145-2011).

At that point, the band debuted their *Dave's Picks* series. These albums were compiled by David Lemieux and returned to the single show concept. These have proven to be very successful, with most of them charting. The sets that have cracked the American pop albums chart by volume number and recording date, as well as their chart placement are listed as follows. *Volume 2 – 1974* (#145-2012), *Volume 3 – 1971* (#34-2012), *Volume 5 -1973* (#38-2013), *Volume 6 – 1969 & 1970* (#32-2013), *Volume 7 – 1978* (#26-2013), *Volume 9 - 1974* (#30-2014), *Volume 12 – 1977* (#29-2014), *Volume 13 – 1974* (#32-2015), *Volume 14 – 1972* (#31-2015), *Volume 16 – 1973* (#34-2015), *Volume 17 – 1974* (#31-2016), *Volume 18 - 1976* (#38-2016), *Volume 19 – 1970* (#19-2016), *Volume 20 – 1981* (#39-2016), *Volume 21 – 1973* (#26-2017), *Volume 22 – 1971* (#34-2017), *Volume 23 – 1978* (#30-2017), *Volume 24 – 1972* (#91-2017), *Volume 25 – 1977* (#27-2018), *Volume 26 – 1971* (#26-2018), *Volume 27 – 1983* (#29-2018), *Volume 28 – 1976* (#35-2018), *Volume 29 – 1977* (#26-2019), *Volume 30 – 1970* (#30-2019), *Volume 31 – 1979* (#26-2019), *Volume 32 – 1973* (#22-2019), and *Volume 33 – 1977* (#45-2020).

In addition to all of this, the Grateful Dead have released several successful DVD/videos. *The Grateful Dead Movie* (1977) was certified double platinum in the States for 200,000 copies sold in February, 2005. *The Closing Of Winterland* (2003) was also certified double platinum in America in December, 2003. *View From The Vault II* (2001), *A View From The Vault Volume One* (2000), *Downhill From Here* (1997*), Ticket To New Year's* (1996), *Dead Ahead* (1981), *Dead Ringers: The Making Of Touch Of Grey* (1987), and *So Far* (1987), have all been certified gold in the U.S. for 50,000 copies sold each.

While the Grateful Dead officially disbanded when Garcia died, the former original members all remained very active for decades. In 1998, Weir, Lesh, Hart, and Hornsby formed The Other Ones with Mark Karan, Steve Kimock, John Molo, and Dave Ellis. They toured and recorded a live album, *The Strange Remain* (#112-1999). It made the lower levels of the American pop albums chart. The band reunited in 2000, with Kreutzmann coming onboard and Lesh leaving. Alphonso Johnson also joined on bass while Molo and Ellis left. In 2002, they toured once again with a lineup of Weir, Lesh, Hart, Kreutzmann, Jimmy Herring, Rob Barraco, Jeff Chimenti, and Susan Tedeschi.

In 2003, The Other Ones changed their name to The Dead. The initial lineup included Weir, Lesh, Hart, Kreutzmann, Herring, Barraco, Chimenti, and Joan Osborne. They toured in 2003. In 2004, Warren Haynes joined the band. In 2008, Weir, Lesh, Hart Kreutzmann, Chimenti, and Haynes played two benefit

shows for Barack Obama's Presidential campaign. They also played at one of his inaugural balls, then toured in the spring of 2009, playing 23 shows.

The Dead evolved into Further in 2009. The initial lineup included Weir, Lesh, John Kadiecik, Jeff Chimenti, Jay Lane, and Joe Russo. They wound up touring in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. In late 2009, Sunshine Becker and Zoe Ellis joined on backing vocals. Ellis dropped out in early 2010 and was replaced by Jeff Pehrson. Lane dropped out in early 2010 and was not replaced. The band broke up in November, 2014. That set the stage for a reunion of Weir, Lesh, Hart, and Kreutzmann in 2015 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the band.

Accompanied by Phish's Trey Anastasio, Hornsby, and Chimenti, the four surviving members played 5 shows under the banner, *Fare Thee Well: Celebrating 50 Years of the Grateful Dead*. The first two shows were on June 27 and 28, 2015 at Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, California. All 151,650 tickets sold out quickly, generating over 21.5 million dollars in revenue. The last three shows were between July 3 and 5 at Soldier Field in Chicago. Once again, all 210,283 seats were sold, generating another 30.68 million in revenue.

The concerts were also aired live on various pay per view services and YouTube's subscription services. They were simulcasted at movie theaters across the United States. The pay per view broadcasts surpassed 400,000 subscriptions. During the five shows, the band played 83 different songs. Only "Drums", "Space", "Truckin'", and "Cumberland Blues" were repeated. The shows were documented on three different recordings.

Fare Thee Well: Complete Box Set (2015) was released on November 20, 2015. It includes twelve CDs and seven DVDs and captures all three Chicago concerts. In addition, *Fare Thee Well: July 5 2015* (2015) is a three disc release that captures the last show. Finally, *The Best Of Fare Thee Well* (2015) captures 16 tracks from the three day stand.

In the fall of 2015, Hart, Kreutzmann, Weir, Chimenti, John Mayer, and Oteil Burbridge formed Dead & Company. They were initially set up as a touring band and played twenty two shows that year. They were so well received that they continued to tour annually. In 2016, they performed twenty four shows. They upped that amount to thirty five shows in 2017, twenty six shows in 2018, and twenty nine shows in 2019.

After playing a three day event in Mexico in January 2020, they had to cancel their summer tour due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, they returned in 2021 for thirty one shows in the summer, requiring all ticket buyers to supply proof of vaccination or a recent negative test to enter the venues. They tour marked the debut of Jay Lane, who filled in for Kreutzmann for health reasons. They also went out on the road in the summer of 2022, playing another twenty shows.

In 2023, they announced that they were going out on a final tour. After playing five more shows early in the year with Kreutzmann, he left the band and Lane joined full-time. Kreutzmann immediately formed a boutique band called Billy & The Kids, which is still active as of 2026. During that summer, Dead & Company played twenty six shows throughout the summer, culminating with a three night-stand at Oracle Park in San Francisco in mid-July. The shows during 2023 grossed over one hundred million dollars.

In 2024, the band started a residency at the Sphere in Las Vegas that include thirty shows. These shows are now famous for their immersive Dead Forever visuals. To celebrate the group's 60th anniversary, they returned to the Sphere for eighteen more shows in 2025. They then played a final three night-stand at

Golden Gate Park in early August. The final show on August 3 was the last of Weir's life. He had been battling with various health issues, including cancer, and his weakened lungs finally gave way on January 10, 2026. He was 78 years old.

While Dead & Company did not release any studio recordings, they have released over 200 live recordings which are available on nugs.net. They include all their live shows with the exception of the 48 shows they played in the Sphere. Both Spotify and Apple have all the shows through 2022 (170) available for streaming. Finally, Archive.org has copies of all 260 shows they played available for streaming and download.

In addition to their activities together, the four surviving members all pursued individual projects. Weir formed RatDog in 1995 with Rob Wasserman, Jay Lane, and Matthew Kelly. They played their first show the day before Garcia died. They remained active until 2014, releasing two albums, *Evening Moods* (2000) and *Live At Roseland* (2001) along the way. Weir put them on indefinite hiatus in early 2014 to focus on Dead & Company.

While RatDog was active, numerous other musicians have been members, including Vince Welnick, Johnnie Johnson, Dave Ellis, Mookie Siegel, Dave McNabb, Mark Karan, Kenny Brooks, and Steve Kimock. Jeff Chimenti joined on a full time basis in May 1997 and remained until 2014. Robin Sylvester joined full time in March, 2003 and remained until 2014.

Over the years, former Grateful Dead members Hart, Kreutzmann, Donna Godchaux, and Bruce Hornsby played shows with RatDog and notable artists like Joan Baez, Warren Haynes, Jimmy Herring, Derek Trucks, Trey Anastasio, Les Claypool, Pete Sears, John Popper, Dickie Betts, Sammy Hagar, Al Schnier, Eloostik Hookah, DJ Logic, Susan James, and Keller Williams sat in with them.

Lesh formed Phil Lesh and Friends in 1999. Their lineup frequently changed, with Steve Kimock and John Molo being the only constants, along with Lesh. The band has released three albums, *Love Will See You Through* (1999), *There And Back Again* (2002), and *Live at the Warfield* (2006). The group remained together through August 18, 2024. It turned out to be their last show as Lesh passed away on October 25, 2024. He was 84 years old.

In 2006, Hart and Kreutzmann formed the Rhythm Devils with Steve Kimock, Mike Gordon, Jen Durkin, and Sikiru Adepoju. They toured that year, then went on hiatus until 2010, when the two drummers hit the road again with Adepoju, Keller Williams, Davy Knowles, and Andy Hess. In 2011, Williams left and was replaced by Tim Bluhm. Their last show on July 24, 2011 featured Hart, Kreutzmann, Kimock, Keller Williams, and Reed Mathis.

Vince Welnick passed away on June 2, 2006. He committed suicide by cutting his own throat after battling depression for 10 years. He had successfully battled cancer and emphysema earlier in his life and had first tried to commit suicide six months after Garcia's death. Both of the primary lyricists associated with the band have also passed away. Robert Hunter died on September 23, 2019 after having unspecified surgery. He was 78 years old. John Perry Barlow, who wrote primarily with Weir, passed away on February 7, 2018. He suffered a near fatal heart attack in 2015 and never fully recovered. He died in his sleep at the age of 70.

Donna Godchaux performed with the Donna Jean Godchaux Band, which remained active into 2020. She passed away from a long battle with cancer on November 2, 2025, at the age of 78. Finally, Tom

Constanten remained active in music until he retired in 2024. He is still alive as of January 2026 and sometimes does make some live appearances. Finally, Bruce Hornsby continues to record and release new material with his band, The Noisemakers. He continues to push musical boundaries as of 2026, exploring rock, jazz, contemporary classic, pop, and experimental music.

As explained earlier, the members of the Grateful Dead were shrewd businessmen. In 1976, they set up Grateful Dead Productions to handle touring logistics, their state of the art sound system, and their ever growing mailing lists. The company also managed their publishing company (Ice Nine Publishing) and their record label, Grateful Dead Records. In 1977, the board handled Grateful Dead Records to Arista Records. They also eventually set up Grateful Dead Merchandising.

Two years after Garcia's death, all the separate arms were merged into Grateful Dead Productions. The company had been incorporated since 1976 with a five man board consisting of Garcia, Weir, Lesh, Kreutzmann, and Hart. Prior to Weir's death, he worked with the Board to ensure that the corporation will last another 300 years, ensuring that it remains a family and founder run legacy through generations.

At the present time, Kreutzmann and Hart continue to own their 20% in Grateful Dead Productions along with the 20% shares owned by the Garcia, Lesh, and Weir estates. The most important entity in the continual enterprise is Rhino Records, who manage the band's entire intellectual property from the official Dead.net store to "Dave's Picks" archival releases. They also control the group's likeness and merchandising empire, including any product that is branded with their logo or name. In essence, Rhino handles all day to day operations and distribution under the leadership of Mark Pinkus, who is Rhino's President.

The label continues to work with the Dead's official archivist, David Lemieux, who handles all activities related to the famous Vault, including all releases through Rhino. While the five stakeholders of Grateful Dead Productions are not involved in the day to day running of the empire, they still retain creative rights over everything. In addition to Kreutzmann and Hart, they include the Weir Estate (Bob's wife Natascha and their two daughters, Monet and Chloe), the Lesh Estate (Phil's wife Jill, and their two sons, Grahame and Brian), and the Garcia Estate (long been managed by the guitarist's daughters, Trixie and Annabelle). Grateful Dead Productions takes in around fifty million collars a year in revenue.

When Dead & Company was set up in 2015, Weir set up an agreement with Bernie Cahill & Irving Azoff to manage the band's business interests and created the Dead Forever brand. Not unlike Grateful Dead Productions, a formal corporation was set up with Weir, Hart, Kreutzmann, and John Mayer as principals. The touring revenue for the company has been massive. The 2023 tour grossed over 115 million dollars in two months. Further, the Sphere residency grossed around 200 million dollars in 2024 and 2025. With the death of Weir and the 2023 retirement of Kreutzmann, it is essentially up to Hart and Mayer as to whether the band will continue to tour.

In 2008, the band donated their massive archives to UCSC McHenry Library. The archives include correspondence, photos, fliers, posters, memorabilia, interviews, television appearances, stage backdrops, artwork, props, and contract copies. The band continues to maintain their vast tape catalog themselves.

In 2004, Rolling Stone Magazine ranked the band number 57 on their list of the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time. In 2007, the group received a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award, which was accepted by Mickey Hart and Bill Kreutzmann. In 2011, a recording of the band's May 8, 1977 show at Cornell University was selected for induction into the National Recording Registry of the Library Of Congress.

Somewhat ironically, there are some Deadheads who claim that this show never took place and the recording was taken from other concerts played around the same time.

The Grateful Dead are featured on numerous compilations that capture their studio work. Warner's 1974 set, *Skeletons From The Closet*, is the bestselling Grateful Dead record to date, with over 4 million copies sold. It includes 11 tracks. Warner's 1977 release, *What A Long Strange Trip It's Been*, contains 18 songs recorded between 1967 and 1972. It has been certified platinum. Arista's 1996 set, *The Arista Years*, includes 26 tracks recorded between 1977 and 1990. Rhino's 2003 set, *The Very Best Of The Grateful Dead*, includes 17 tracks. Grateful Dead Records' 2015 release, *The Best Of The Grateful Dead*, contains 32 tracks. Finally, Rhino's 2019 set, *Sage & Spirit*, includes 10 tracks.

The band has also released more live albums than any other artist in rock history. The Dead released eight sets while the group was still active. Warner releases included *Live/Dead* (1969), *Grateful Dead (1971)*, *Europe '72*, and 1973's *History of the Grateful Dead, Vol. 1 (Bear's Choice).* The lone Grateful Dead Records release was 1976's *Steal Your Face*. It includes 14 songs recorded during their early 1974 tour. Arista sets include *Reckoning* (1981), *Dead Set* (1981), and *Without A Net* (1990). All of these albums remain in print and are available at any large music retailer.

Since the death of Garcia, the Dead have released numerous other live sets from Grateful Dead Records that feature individual shows or a series of live shows. To date, there are nearly thirty six different mail order only live sets under the title *Dick's Picks*. Each one chronicles a different show. In addition, there are now sixty sets available under the moniker Dave's Picks. The initial nineteen sets from their digital download series are still available and their *Road Trips* series contains 17 sets. There are also seventy five plus box set downloads of live shows. Just one of those sets, *Europe '72*, contains twenty two separate concert recordings.

Trying to sort through all these live recordings was impossible. So, I did the next best thing and focused on getting live recordings that were decade specific. I have one from the sixties, five from the seventies, one from the eighties, and two from the nineties.

My earliest live recording of the band is their famous Valentine's Day show at the Carousel Ballroom in San Francisco on February 14, 1968. At that point, the band had teamed with rival groups Jefferson Airplane and Quicksilver Messenger Service to lease the venue to compete with the Avalon Ballroom and Fillmore Auditoriums. The three bands each owned 10 percent of the venue and had just put on their first show on January 17, 1968, with the Dead performing. On this particular night, the Dead were playing with opening act Country Joe and the Fish. Their second album, *Anthem of the Sun*, was under production and would be released on July 18, 1968. It incorporated live snippets from this same show.

This particular show is famous among Deadheads for its outstanding recording quality and great performance. The second set was broadcast live via the radio and as such, it was bootlegged a number of times. However, the first set was not previously available, so the band assembled both sets and released them for the first time with this recording. To make things even more attractive, they added four songs that had been recorded just before, and just after, the show from their tour of the Northwest.

The first set includes six songs, including a relatively short version of "Dark Star" and two of McKernan's signature songs, covers of "Good Morning Little Schoolgirl" and "Turn On Your Lovelight". "Dark Star" was written by Hunter and the six members of the band. It would be released as a single a

couple of months after this show. The band also covered Bonnie Dobson's "Morning Dew", which was a traditional set opener during that time period.

In addition, the band played an early version of "China Cat Sunflower", which was written by Garcia and Hunter and would not appear on an album until June 20, 1969, when it was released as part of *Aoxomoxoa*. The other original composition is "The Eleven", which was one of the few songs written by Hunter with Lesh. "Morning Dew" and "Good Morning Little School Girl" had appeared on their first album.

The second set is arguably one of the band's best performances. It ends with a cover of "In The Midnight Hour", which follows six minutes of harrowing feedback. The other six songs are all original compositions. "That's It For The Other One" was written by the original five members. "New Potato Caboose" was written by Lesh and Robert Peterson while "Born Cross-Eyed" was a Weir song. "Alligator" was written by Lesh, McKernan, and Hunter. "Caution (Do Not Stop On Tracks" was written by the five original members and "Spanish Jam" was composed onstage by all six members. All these songs, with the exception of the cover, would make up *Anthem Of The Sun*.

In order to have any appreciation of this recording, one must under the context under which it was recorded. In early 1968, Garcia and Lesh, the best pure musicians in the band, were hell bent on experimentation. The Grateful Dead did not know who they were as a band as of yet but in typical Dead fashion, they were willing to try anything. Their first album was a combination of many styles but mostly reflected the r&b and blues orientation of McKernan, who was very popular with their audiences. As such, the first set featured their most accessible music, opening with a strong version of "Morning Dew" followed by a twelve minute plus cover of "Good Morning Little School Girl". Garcia sings the first while McKernan handles the second.

Both songs are strong, showcasing how intense the band could be at this point. Garcia's guitar solo in "Morning Dew" is loud and full of bite, but not as refined as some later versions. The rhythm section soars in the cover and McKernan sounds great on both harmonica and lead vocals. This version is more laid back than the original, punctuated by Garcia's blues based guitar runs. It mostly meanders along, with high intensity moments scattered throughout. The band closes the set with another strong McKernan led cover of "Turn On Your Lovelight", which became a steady part of their live shows for their entire career. This version leans heavily on the two drummers.

The most fascinating sequence in set one is the one with the three original songs. In typical Dead fashion, they play "Dark Star", "China Cat Sunflower" and "The Eleven" as a medley. It works very well in that context. As is the case throughout the entire recording, McKernan's organ work is much more prevalent in the mix. "Dark Star" includes a jazzy opening sequence and is a clear indication of where the band's music was heading. Lesh is outstanding.

"China Cat Sunflower" is much more muscular than later versions, with soaring Garcia lead guitar solos and a much lower vocal key, which stretches Jerry's voice uncomfortably. McKernan plays the secondary riff in tandem with Weir and it is much faster than later versions. Weir also gets to show off some of his often underappreciated guitar work. The ending jam transitions so seamlessly into "The Eleven" that you will not even know it's a different song. While the harmony vocals on "The Eleven" are a bit ragged, they are off in that wonderful Grateful Dead way. The song has different time signatures at different points, part of Lesh's sophisticated guiding of the music.

The second set, which is the one that was broadcast live on the radio, begins with a complete run through of *Anthem Of The Sun*, with a spontaneous militaristic jam called "Spanish Jam" in the middle of the five songs. The sequence begins with a tight version of "That's It For The Other One", which contains some intricate guitar work from Garcia and Weir. "New Potato Caboose" is highly experimental and works very well, exploring all kinds of musical themes. Lesh's bass work is prominently featured. Unfortunately, the harmony vocals are once again not strong. Weir's "Born Cross-Eyed" is a weird piece featuring chaotic vocals.

Squeals of feedback and droning bass lines introduces "Spanish Jam". It is somewhat ominous and full out psychedelia. At one point, the band evokes Jefferson's Airplane "White Rabbit". It is one example of a Dead jam that works on every level, at least up to nearly two minutes of tuning and random vocals while the recording tape is flipped over. The band then launches into the hard rock of "Alligator", which careens along like a runaway train, with percussion breaks and soaring guitar work from Garcia. It is the epitome of open jamming, which continues with the feedback laced "Caution (Do Not Stop On Tracks)". Again, there is a little of everything included, from percussion sequences to harmonica to loud guitar.

The second set ends with six plus minutes of feedback that will burn your ears before they close with a cover of "In The Midnight Hour". There are also four bonus songs, including a twenty plus minute version of "Viola Lee Blues" that is remarkable. "Beat It On Down The Line" and "Hurts Me Too" are nice and contained and the second version of "Dark Star" is a rare example of the song being played in a standalone manner. The entire thing captures everything that was of note of the sixties lineup and should be considered a must have in any live collection.

Title: Grateful Dead (1971)

Label: Warner Brothers

Release Date: 1971

Medium: Cassette Tape

Availability: Very Good

Venue: The Manhattan Center, NYC, NY
Fillmore East, NYC, NY
Winterland, San Francisco, CA

Recording Date: Manhattan Center - April 4-6, 1971
Fillmore East - April 26-29, 1971
Winterland - March 24, 1971

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Ron McKernan - Keyboards, harmonica, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums

Set List: Bertha
Mama Tried
Big Railroad Blues
Playing In The Band
The Other One
Me And My Uncle
Big Boss Man
Me And Bobby McGee
Johnny B. Goode
Wharf Rat
Not Fade Away
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad

My second live recording from the band is *Grateful Dead* (1971), which was recorded at three different venues between March 24 and April 29, 1971. It is commonly referred to as *Grateful Dead Skull And Roses* to distinguish it from their debut album. By the time this album was recorded in early 1971, the Grateful Dead had defined themselves as the ultimate psychedelic jam band, played Woodstock, survived Altamont, made an astounding transition to Americana country rock, seen their second keyboardist, Tom Constanten, come and go, lost one of their two drummers, been swindled out of over $150,000, and significantly expanded their audience. They had lived a lifetime in the three years since the Carousel performance.

After Constanten left in early 1970 and Hart in February, 1971, the band decided to continue as a fivesome. The resulting tour focused more on their more accessible, relatively concise material, with the exception of an eighteen minute version of "The Other One", which took up one side of the double album set. Many of these songs were new and continued to direction that band had explored on Workingmen's Dead and American Beauty.

The band unleashes future concert classics like "Bertha", "Wharf Rat", "Not Fade Away" and "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad". Garcia's vocals and the up-tempo rhythms, highlighted by Lesh's bass playing, makes "Bertha" a classic. Weir's "Wharf Rat" is transcendental, featuring one of Garcia's best vocal performances. Finally, the band's performance of "Not Fade Away" and "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad" is a feel good bump and grind that morphs into a classic Dead jam.

The band also makes some forays into country. "Mama Tried", "Me And Bobby McGee", and "Me And My Uncle" are given straight forward country treatments that feature Weir's vocals and Garcia's country styled guitar picking. Like everything else on the album, they are extremely well performed. There's also a dose of roots rock including "Big Railroad Blues" and "Johnny B. Goode" as well as a straightforward rocker called "Playing In The Band". McKernan is featured on the blues classic, "Big Boss Man", providing both lead vocals and a nice harmonica solo. Garcia also contributes a restrained guitar solo. Finally, "The Other One" is the band's tribute to psychedelia, showing that they still could elevate the consciousness with some long jams if they were so inclined.

Grateful Dead (1971) is well recorded, well played and well structured. The band's performance highlights their innate diversity. They are able to shift styles at will. Vocal quality, long considered a liability, is excellent from both a lead vocal and harmony standpoint. All in all, this is a set you will want to own. *Grateful Dead (1971)* has been reissued on CD and is available at any music retailer.

Title: Ladies And Gentlemen…The Grateful Dead

Label: Grateful Dead/Arista

Release Date: 2000

Medium: CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Fillmore East, NYC, NY

Recording Date: April 25-29, 1971

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Lead guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Ron McKernan - Organ, harmonica, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Tom Constanten - Keyboards (5 tracks)

Set List: Truckin'
Bertha
Next Time You See Me
Beat It On Down The Line
Bird Song
Dark Hollow
I Second That Emotion
Me And My Uncle
Cumberland Blues
Good Lovin'
Drums
Good Lovin'
Sugar Magnolia
Loser
Ain't It Crazy
El Paso
I'm A King Bee
Ripple
Me and Bobby McGee
Uncle John's Band
Turn On Your Lovelight
China Cat Sunflower
I Know You Rider
It Hurts Me Too
Sing Me Back Home
Hard To Handle
Dark Star
St. Stephen
Not Fade Away
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad
Not Fade Away
Morning Dew
New Minglewood Blues
Wharf Rat
Alligator
Drums
Jam
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad
Cold Rain And Snow
Casey Jones
In The Midnight Hour
And We Bid You Goodnight

I have to admit that this set is an indulgence that I could not pass up. Containing some of the same songs that appeared on *Grateful Dead Skull And Roses*, the four disc set captures nearly every individual song the band played during their five night stand at the Fillmore East in April, 1971. The songs are taken from four of the nights, with nothing included from April 26. Tom Constanten showed up as a guest artist on five tracks that were recorded on April 28, playing on "Dark Star" through the "Not Fade Away/Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad/Not Fade Away" medley.

All of this is well recorded, and you get a fantastic cross section of the band's best material from the beginning of their career. There are too many highlights to mention. First, you get fantastic performances of classics like "Casey Jones", "Uncle John's Band", "Sugar Magnolia", "Bertha", and "Truckin'". The band's often problematic harmonies were pretty tight during this stand and while they were not perfect, especially during the last parts of "Uncle John's Band", these performances are strong. The group had an unique ability to string together songs into extended medleys and the "Alligator/Drums/Jam/Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad" sequence is outstanding. The ensemble performance on "China Cat Sunflower" rivals the one on *Europe '72*. Weir shows off his underrated lead guitar work on this song and others ("Hard To Handle"), which flows seamlessly into "I Know You Rider".

Two of Garcia's signature songs, "Wharf Rat" and "Morning Dew" are powerful reminders of just how talented he was. His overall performance on "Bird Song" made my hair stand on end. The Constanten five song sequence is the only live recording I have of the band playing with him and is personally a highlight. McKernan is at his best during his covers of "Hard To Handle"; "I'm A King Bee", "It Hurts Me Too", and "Ain't It Crazy (The Rub)". The band's overall ability to take songs by other artists and make them their own is often overlooked. On this set, they knock out solid versions of Merle Haggard's "Sing Me Back Home"; Kris Kristofferson's "Me and Bobby McGee" and the r&b classic "I Second That Emotion". Weir also shines during a cover of Marty Robbins' "El Paso".

The five tracks that include Constanten are spectacular. His organ work is upfront in the mix and he adds tasteful runs and chording work at every appropriate moment. This version of "Dark Star" is very strong, with Garcia, Lesh, and Weir unleashing all of their considerable talent. Their version of "St. Stephen" is as close to hard rock as this band gets and may be my favorite rendering of the classic. Finally, Kreutzmann is on fire during the "Not Fade Away", "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad", "Not Fade Away" medley, signaling to the rest of the band exactly when to transition from one song to the other.

The set ends with an acapella version of "We Bid You Goodnight", a perfect way to end a remarkable collection of music. While some may consider this set to be excessive, I love it. If you are a fan of early seventies Grateful Dead, then consider this a must have!

Title: Europe '72

Label: Warner Brothers

Release Date: 1972

Medium: Triple Album

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Empire Pool, Wimbley, London, U.K.
Concertgeboux, Amsterdam, Holland
The Lyceum, London, England
Olympia Theater, Paris, France
Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen, Denmark

Recording Date: April 8 - May 26, 1972

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Bob McKernan - Keyboards, harmonica, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Keith Godchaux - Keyboards
Donna Godchaux - Vocals

Set List: Cumberland Blues
He's Gone
One More Saturday Night
Jack Straw
You Win Again
China Cat Sunflower
I Know You Rider
Brown Eyed Woman
It Hurts Me Too
Ramble On Rose
Sugar Magnolia
Mr. Charlie
Tennessee Jed
Truckin'/Epilogue
Prelude
Morning Dew

Europe '72 was released by Warner Brothers after the live gold record *Grateful Dead (1971)*. Like it's predecessor, it was a best seller, eventually going multi-platinum. Recorded at five venues in the spring of 1972 and later remixed at the band's custom studio in San Francisco, the set continues the direction laid out on *Grateful Dead* (1971). While some of the songs do appear on previous albums, including their debut ("Morning Dew"), *Aoxomoxoa* ("China Cat Sunflower"), *Workingman's Dead* ("Cumberland Blues"), and *American Beauty* ("Truckin' and Sugar Magnolia"), most of the material is new.

By the time this set was recorded, Keith Godchaux had joined the band to augment McKernan's increasingly erratic playing. He also brought along his wife, Donna, who provided backup vocals. Like *Grateful Dead (1971)*, the sequencing of the songs on this compilation was well thought out. It flows very well from start to finish, with the longer jam oriented songs ending the album. Throughout it, the band showcases their ability to play medium paced, lazy rhythms that lull the listener into a state of relaxation

that is only broken by occasional bursts of guitar. It's like sitting by a river, watching it slowly flow by. It just ambles along, eventually getting to its destination without a lot of fuss.

Songs like "He's Gone", "Jack Straw", "Ramble On Rose", "Brown Eyed Woman" and "Tennessee Jed" are representative of this style. They are also some of the best live recordings of the Dead that I have heard. They are combined with faster paced songs like "One More Saturday Night", "Mr. Charlie", "Sugar Magnolia" and "Truckin'", but even they are relatively restrained, in keeping with the overall mood of the set.

The only exceptions to this are a relatively chaotic version of "Cumberland Blues", which features intricate instrumental work and the always fascinating "China Cat Sunflower", which has a classic psychedelic era riff and some additional intricate instrumental sequences. Of course, this is the Grateful Dead, so there has to be some noodling. It starts with the long ending sequence of "Truckin'" and continues with two jams called "Epilogue" and "Prelude". Both are classic Grateful Dead instrumental excursions that incorporate avant-garde jazz elements along with nearly every other style of music you can imagine.

McKernan's showcase (this is the last album he played on before he died) is the Elmore James blues classic, "It Hurts Me Too". Some of Garcia's better moments on the record are on the Hank Williams' country classic, "You Win Again", and on his tour de force version of the blues classic, "Morning Dew". His restrained work on the former and his impassioned playing on the latter are proof that he could play guitar with the best of them. Many consider this performance of "Morning Dew" to be the best he ever played.

Keith Godchaux's piano is prominently featured on "Cumberland Blues", "You Win Again", and during the jams. Donna Godchaux's vocals are only audible in the closing chorus of the traditional "I Know You Rider". The band's performance throughout this exquisitely recorded set is among the best in their career. Vocal quality is excellent, with some great harmonies. The choruses of many of the songs are surprisingly catchy. It's no wonder that many fans consider *Europe '72* to be their best live album. This record has been reissued as a two CD package that is available at any music retailer.

Title: Europe '72 Volume 2

Label: Rhino

Release Date: 2011

Medium: CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Wembley Pool Empire, London, UK
Tivoli Concert Hall, Copenhagen
Jahrhunert Halle, Frankfort, Germany
L'Olympia, Paris, France
Le Grand Théâtre, Luxembourg
Bickershaw Festival, Wigan, England
Strand Lyceum, London, UK

Recording Date: April 7 –May 24, 1972

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Bob McKernan - Keyboards, harmonica, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Keith Godchaux - Keyboards
Donna Godchaux - Vocals

Set List: Bertha
Me And My Uncle
Chinatown Shuffle
Sugaree
Beat It On Down The Line
Loser
Next Time You See Me
Black-Throated Wind
Dire Wolf
Greatest Story Ever Told
Deal
Good Lovin'
Playing In The Band
Dark Star
Drums
The Other One
Sing Me Back Home
Not Fade Away
Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad
Not Fade Away 2

Any recordings from the band's remarkable twenty two date European tour in April and May, 1972 are worth having in your music collection. For those of you who want everything, all twenty two shows are now available via a new boxset.. However, I have found that the two official sets offer more than enough. The multi-platinum original set was supplemented by this twenty song set in 2011 with no songs repeated between the two albums. Since some of the songs were recorded at the same venues, these twenty tracks sound just as good as the original tracks and the performance is equally as good.

While there are plenty of tight performances like those on Europe '72, this set offers more of the improvisational side of the band. Fifty one minutes are devoted to the "Dark Star/Drums/The Other One" jam. While this is too much for anyone other than a hard core fan, it's there for all to consume. There are plenty of highlights. Popular Dead numbers like "Bertha", "Playing In The Band", "Dark Star", "Me And My Uncle", "Dire Wolf", and the "Not Fade Away/Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad/Not Fade Away' medley are included. The band's covers Garcia's "Sugaree", the most popular song from his debut solo album and pulls off a great cover of "Good Lovin"".

Lesser known songs like their Merle Haggard cover, "Sing Me Back Home" and little known originals like "Black –Throated Wind" and "Chinatown Shuffle" make this a treat for collectors. They also cover Jesse Fuller's "Beat It On Down The Line", and the Harvey/Forest "Next Time You See Me". Add in other originals like "Deal", "Loser", and "Greatest Story Ever Told" and you have another classic. A definite must have.

Title: One From The Vault

Label: Grateful Dead Records

Release Date: 1991

Medium: Double CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: The Great American Music Hall, San Francisco, CA

Recording Date: August 13, 1975

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Donna Godchaux - Background vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Mickey Hart - Percussion
Keith Godchaux - Keyboards, vocals

Set List: Help On The Way/Slipknot
Franklin's Tower
The Music Never Stopped
It Must Have Been The Roses
Eyes Of The World/Drums
King Solomon's Marbles/Stronger Than Dirt
Around & Around
Sugaree
Big River
Crazy Fingers/Drums
The Other One
Sage And Spirit
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad
U.S. Blues
Blues For Allah/Sand Castles & Glass Camels/
Unusual Occurrences In The Desert

My sixth Grateful Dead live album from the seventies is a bit of an oddity. It was recorded during a nearly two year lull in the band's touring schedule. After finishing recording sessions for 1975's *Blues For Allah*, the group decided to preview it's new album by giving a concert. While they played the entire new album, they also threw in some classic material from the seventies.

Blues For Allah was the second studio album the group recorded after they decided to quit touring for a while in 1974. Generally regarded as the band's third best studio album, behind the war-horses *Workingman's Dead* and *American Beauty*, *Blues For Allah* featured complicated suite like passages not unlike some of their early psychedelic work. The fact that they would preview it live makes it unique among any of their studio albums.

Aside from playing the entire album, the band throws in the best song from *Mars Hotel*, "U.S. Blues", "Eyes Of The World" from *Wake Of The Flood*, "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad" and "The Other One" from *Grateful Dead (1971),* and four songs that they had been featuring in concert during their 1974 tour. All of these songs, "Around & Around", "Sugaree", "It Must Have Been The Roses", and "Big River", would be included on 1976's live album, *Steal Your Face*, which documented the 1974 tour.

Having been off the road for some time when this concert was recorded, one would expect that the Grateful Dead would be a little ragged. In fact, the performance is very tight. The group is clearly excited by the circumstances surrounding the show and this is reflected in their performance. The set begins with three songs from *Blues For Allah* that became a frequent part of future live shows. The songs are more lively than the new material on *Europe '72*, reflecting a move towards jazz oriented rock. Donna Godchaux gets a rare vocal feature on "The Music Never Stopped". After a couple of chestnuts from their catalog, the group continues their *Blues For Allah* exploration with the jazz instrumental "King Solomon's Marbles/Stronger Than Dirt". This song features intricate solo work from both Garcia and Keith Godchaux.

The band gets even farther out there on the reggae influenced, minor key, sometimes atonal "Crazy Fingers", which serves as a lead in for a drum solo. The song is somewhat reminiscent of Paul Simon's seventies solo work. Highlighting their versatility, the band goes completely in the other direction for "Sage And Spirit". The song is a quiet guitar oriented instrumental that features some classical like finger picking from Weir.

The Dead then conclude the concert with a twenty one minute suite, "Blues For Allah/Sand Castles and Glass Camels/Unusual Occurrences In The Desert". This suite is hard to describe. The first section is a rhythmically oriented psychedelic piece that is unlike anything else in the band's catalog with the exception of *Anthem Of The Sun*. There are sound effects, repetitive guitar riffs and ever changing percussion. As the suite continues, guitars and chants flow in and out of the mix, leading to a finish that features Garcia most coherent guitar work. I am not sure if this suite appears on any of their other live recordings, making it somewhat unique.

In addition to the *Blues For Allah* material, the band does play other selections from their seventies catalog. "It Must Have Been The Roses" is a lovely slow paced country piece that features outstanding vocals from Garcia and great harmonies from the entire band. "Eyes Of The World" is a lazy bump and grind from *Wake Of The Flood* that features some of the best bass work on any Dead recording, courtesy of Phil Lesh. The song also serves as a lead in for a second drum solo.

The Grateful Dead usually throws in a roots rock piece into every show. This time it's Chuck Berry's "Around & Around". Both Weir and Donna Godchaux are featured on vocals. "Sugaree", from Garcia 1972 solo album *Garcia*, is more reflective of the *Europe '72* material. The song is given a lazy, meandering treatment that works extremely well.

Johnny Cash's "Big River" is a fast paced country romp that allows Garcia and Keith Godchaux to show off their instrumental prowess. Weir also provides a good lead vocal. The version of "The Other One" that is included here is 13 minutes shorter than the cut on *Grateful Dead (1971)* but manages to retain the same flavor. The band performs an exceptional version of "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad" that is followed by a somewhat ragged, but still entertaining, version of "U.S. Blues".

What ultimately makes *One From The Vault* somewhat unique are the circumstances surrounding the show and the selection of material. The set is well recorded and features some of Garcia's and Lesh's most fluid playing. It also reflects the jazzy side of the band, undoubtedly the result of Keith Godchaux's influence on the rest of the band. While some of the Dick's Picks selections focus on live shows from both 1974 and 1976, this seems to be the preferred Deadhead selection from this time period. *One From The Vault* is available at any large music retailer.

Title: Download Series Volume 5

Label: Grateful Dead Records

Release Date: 2005

Medium: Download

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Hampton Coliseum, Hampton, Virginia

Recording Date: March 27, 1988

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Vocals, lead guitar
Bob Weir - Vocals, guitar
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums
Brent Mydland - Keyboards, vocals
Mickey Hart - Drums

Set List: Iko Iko
Little Red Rooster
Stagger Lee
Ballad Of A Thin Man
Cumberland Blues
Me And My Uncle
To Lay Me Down
Let It Grow
Space
So What
Sugar Magnolia
Scarlet Begonias
Fire On The Mountain
Estimated Prophet
Eyes Of The World
Rhythm Devils
Space
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad
I Need A Miracle
Dear Mr. Fantasy
Sunshine Daydream
U.S. Blues

The eighties were an interesting decade. The first half was dominated by the heroin addiction of Garcia, who nearly passed away from a diabetic coma in the middle of 1986 and had to relearn how to play guitar. When he emerged, he lost weight, cut back on smoking, and cleaned himself from all the drugs. The band promptly had a top ten single and album in 1987. The 1987 and 1988 tours featured some of the best playing of the group's career, with Garcia fully engaged and the six musicians hitting on all cylinders.

So, when the band hit the Hampton Coliseum in Virginia on March 27, 1988, they were on top of their game. That is abundantly clear during this 22 song set, which captures them on a good night. It was released as part of the Dead's Download series in 2005 and is often considered to be the band's best single recording from the eighties.

The band loved to play the Hampton Coliseum and did so twenty two times between 1979 and 1992. It was relatively smaller than the other venues they were playing, with seating for a little over 13,800 people, and sound quality was good for a venue that size. The arena looked like a spaceship from the outside and soon earned the moniker Mothership from the Deadhead community. They were also one of the few arenas in the country that still allowed general admission seating, which had been largely discontinued after the 1979 tragic Cincinnati Who concert.

The band typically played multi nightstands as the eighties progressed, including on this occasion. This recording is the second night of a three nightstand. There are several things that make this set unique. One is the cover of Bob Dylan's "Ballad Of A Thin Man", with Weir on lead vocals. They had first played this song with Dylan during their joint summer tour the year before, but this was the first time they performed it themselves. They would only perform it one other time. This is also the only show where they paired "Cumberland Blues" with "Me And My Uncle" under the playful name, "cowboy songs". They also played "To Lay Me Down" for the first time since 1983. Then, they played a snippet of Miles Davis' "So What" to begin the second set, the only time they would ever play the song.

The highlight of the set is the five song sequence of "Sugar Magnolia", "Scarlet Begonias", "Fire On The Mountain", "Estimated Prophet", and "Eyes Of The World" in the second set. When Deadheads refer to the band as "lifting off", this is what they are talking about. The synergy and ensemble playing is remarkable and the group's energy level is very high. The band also lays down some New Orleans funk during a solid cover of "Iko Iko", followed by the gritty "Little Red Rooster", which features Weir's slide guitar work. He is surprisingly good. Mydland also is featured on lead vocals and organ.

Weir does his best Bob Dylan impression on an impressive version of "The Ballad Of A Thin Man', which is punctuated by searing, fast guitar riffs from Garcia. While the guitarist's voice was pretty much shot by the years of smoking by 1988, he bravely soldiers his way through "To Lay Me Down". However, he gets an injection from the fountain of youth during the remarkable sequence that begins with him noodling through a couple of minutes of Miles Davis' "So What" that leads into perhaps the best block of music that I have from the band.

I have always considered Jerry to be one of rock's best guitarists, but his work during "Sugar Magnolia", "Scarlet Begonias", "Fire On The Mountain", "Estimated Prophet", and "Eyes Of The World" is transcendental. The runs are lightning fast, very clean, and in perfect harmony with Mydland's equally remarkable keyboard work. The rest of the band must have realized that there was something very special going on between the two musicians because they stuck to the basics and let the two fly. The resulting ensemble musicianship during this block of music ranks up there with the best live music in my entire collection.

And, if all this isn't spectacular enough, Garcia's voice suddenly improves 1000 percent during "Scarlet Begonias" and continues to be strong during "Fire On The Mountain".. Somehow, he manages to channel early seventies Jerry. Not to be outdone, Weir's vocals on "Sugar Magnolia" and "Estimated Prophet" are just as remarkable. Even the harmonies are strong. Garcia then throws down a fantastic version of "Eyes Of The World", once again channeling early seventies Jerry with another strong vocal performance. Mydland's piano riffs and Garcia's guitar work during the song are otherworldly. Lesh also lets loose on bass, with some equally amazing work of his own.

It's impossible to top this sequence of music but the band does their best and manages to keep the magic flowing. Mydland does a great job on lead vocals during "Dear Mr. Fantasy" and playing the "Sunshine Daydream" chorus to "Sugar Magnolia" connects the entire set of music. The band then takes the show out with a great version of "U.S. Blues", capping off a truly spectacular performance. Consider this one a must have in your live collection.

Title: Dozin' At The Knick

Label: Grateful Dead Records

Release Date: 1996

Medium: Triple CD

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Knickerbocker Arena, Albany, NY

Recording Date: March 24 -26, 1990

Lineup: Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals
Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals
Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals
Bill Kreutzmann - Drums, percussion
Mickey Hart - Drums, percussion
Brent Mydland - Keyboards, vocals

Set List: Hell In A Bucket
Dupree's Diamond Blues
Just A Little Light
Walkin' Blues
Jack-A-Roe
Never Trust A Woman
When I Paint My Masterpiece
Row, Jimmy
Blow Away
Playing In The Band
Uncle John's Band
Lady With A Fan
Terrapin Station
Mud Love Buddy Jam
Drums
Space
The Wheel
All Along The Watchtower
Stella Blue
Not Fade Away
And We Bid You Goodnight
Space
I Will Take You Home
Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad
Black Peter
Around & Around
Brokedown Palace

No Grateful Dead live collection would be complete without at least one recording from the band's nineties period. Culled from a three nightstand at the Knickerbocker Arena in Albany, New York, *Dozin' At The Knick* catches the band during a solid stand of music. In 1989, the band had reinvigorated their shows by returning to some of their older material. Thus, you have songs from *Aoxomoxoa*, *Workingman's Dead*, *American Beauty*, *Grateful Dead (1971)*, *Wake Of The Flood*, *Steal Your Face* and *Terrapin Station*. There are also two Dylan covers, a Robert Johnson blues classic, some traditional pieces and material from the

band's two late eighties albums, *In The Dark* and *Built To Last*. The group's lineup included Brent Mydland who is prominently featured throughout the set. He would pass away from a drug overdose just a few months after this show took place.

While the later day Grateful Dead definitely showed some wear and tear, they were still a great band. Their unique ability to mix rockers with blues standards, country with roots rock, and psychedelia with jazz influenced jams was still there, in some ways stronger than ever. At their best, the band sounded great. While there are some negative moments in the set, on balance it has far more pluses. As is always the case with a Grateful Dead live recording, sound quality is outstanding.

The band also throws in a few surprises. Mydland's New Orleans influenced piano work stands out in "Dupree's Diamond Blues", an infrequently played song from *Aoxomoxoa*. Weir tackles a blues song in addition to his usual rockers. His gritty vocals and nice slide guitar work liven up Robert Johnson's classic "Walkin' Blues". He also gets to sing the relatively obscure Dylan cover, "When I Paint My Masterpiece". "The Mud Love Buddy Jam" also known as "Your Mind Has Left Your Body", is captured on a disc for the first time.

Not wanting to be outdone, Garcia also throws in a rarely performed song, "The Wheel", from his self-titled 1972 solo recording. He also sizzles during a great version of "All Along The Watchtower", a further demonstration that he could play with anyone, including Hendrix. Finally, there's a surprisingly good a Capella version of "And We Bid You Goodbye" that appears here for the first time.

Each of the set's discs has a different orientation. The first is dominated by Mydland who is featured on "Just A Little Light", "Never Trust A Woman" and "Blow Away". Weir gives a great vocal performance on the only song from *In The Dark*, the rocking "Hell In A Bucket". Garcia also gives a good vocal performance on "Row, Jimmy", from *Wake Of The Flood.* The second disc is more oriented to classic Dead material. While the band struggles with the intricate harmonies that are required in "Playing In The Band" and especially "Uncle John's Band", you have to give them points for trying. And, both songs contain most of the group's legendary jamming.

The two *Terrapin Station* selections, "Lady With A Fan" and "Terrapin Station" are nice inclusions, if only because they are different from the usual Dead fare. The disc also contains the aforementioned "Mud Love Buddy Jam" which will appeal to Deadheads everywhere. The last disc is loaded with surprises. Aside from the already mentioned "The Wheel" and "All Along The Watchtower", there is great version of "Stella Blue", which features Garcia's best vocal work on the album. He also contributes some inspirational guitar work.

The guitarist, who's voice had deepened over the years, still manages to crank out passable vocal performances in "Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad" and "Black Peter". Mydland cranks up the emotion meter on the Eagles like "I Will Take You Home", which also features some realistic keyboard generated trumpet effects. "Not Fade Away" and "Around & Around" are a little loose, which works particularly well. The set then ends with an eerily prophetic version of "Brokedown Palace" from *American Beauty*. Sung in tandem by Garcia and Mydland, the song accurately predicts the two men's ultimate demise.

While *Dozin' At The Knick* does contain some filler, like the snippets of "Space" that appear on nearly all their live recordings, and the drum solos, the overall performance is very good. Garcia's guitar work is both fluid and explosive, Mydland's keyboards are everywhere, Weir is at his rocking best, Lesh is his usual inventive self, creating lead bass runs while often anchoring the melody, and the rhythm section of

Kreutzmann and Hart is steady. This is a great example of a mature band at work. Their ability to change styles and add nuances to songs they had played many times before stands out.

There are at least two other recordings that are available from the same time period. 1990's *Without A Net* was recorded from the same tour. It contains fourteen songs, all of which do not appear on *Dozin' At The Knick*. It also features Branford Marsalis on sax. The second set is *Dick's Picks Volume 9*. This album captures a September, 1990 performance that features new keyboardist Vince Welnick and guest Bruce Hornsby. It is available via order from Grateful Dead Records. Both *Dozin' At The Knick* and *Without A Net* are available at any large music retailer.

Title: Bill Graham Tribute Concert

Label: Wolfgang's Vault

Release Date: 2009

Medium: Download

Availability: Very Good

Venue: Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA

Recording Date: November 3, 1991

Lineup:	Jerry Garcia - Guitar, vocals	Bill Kreutzmann	- Drums, percussion
	Bob Weir - Guitar, vocals	Mickey Hart	- Drums, percussion
	Phil Lesh - Bass, vocals	Vince Welnick	- Keyboards, vocals
	John Popper - Harmonica (1 track)	Neil Young	- Guitar, vocals (1 track)
	Graham Nash - Vocals (1 track)	Kris Kristofferson	- Vocals, (1 track)

Set List:	Hell In A Bucket	The Other One
	China Cat Sunflower	Wharf Rat
	I Know You Rider	Sunshine Daydream
	Wang Dang Doodle	Forever Young
	Truckin'	Touch Of Grey

My last live recording of this iconic live group is taken from a 1991 tribute concert to Bill Graham that Steve Kahn and Melissa Gold held in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. The free concert, which was labeled "Laughter, Love and Music", took place ten days after the death of Graham and his associates in a helicopter crash. It included performances by CSN&Y, Journey, Santana, Joan Baez, Jackson Browne, John Fogerty and The Grateful Dead, who performed an abbreviated one hour plus set that included guest appearances from John Popper, Neil Young, Graham Nash, and Kris Kristofferson. An estimated 300,000 fans showed up. Recording quality is very good.

I must admit that I didn't have high expectations for this set. However, I was very pleasantly surprised. Maybe it is the benefit show setting, maybe they were just having a good day, but the band sounds great throughout these ten tracks. The group starts out strongly on the first three tracks, which feature great ensemble instrumental work and strong vocals by Weir. John Popper makes a guest appearance on an equally strong version of "Wang Dang Doodle", before the Dead noodle their way through "Truckin"".

"Truckin"" eventually morphs into "The Other One" which is relatively contained. "Wharf Rat" features Garcia on lead vocals. While his voice weakened near the end of his life, he still manages to convey the essence of the song, which flows into the chorus section of "Sugar Magnolia".

After a short break, Neil Young takes the stage to sing “Forever Young”, backed by the Dead and guest vocalists Graham Nash and Kris Kristofferson, who are barely heard. The Dead then close the show with their best live version of “Touch Of Grey”, which ends the show on an upbeat note. While later day live recordings of the Grateful Dead can be problematic, this one is excellent, capturing the entire group at their best. As such, it is highly recommended. While Wolfgang’s Vault no longer sells downloads, you can stream it at any time.