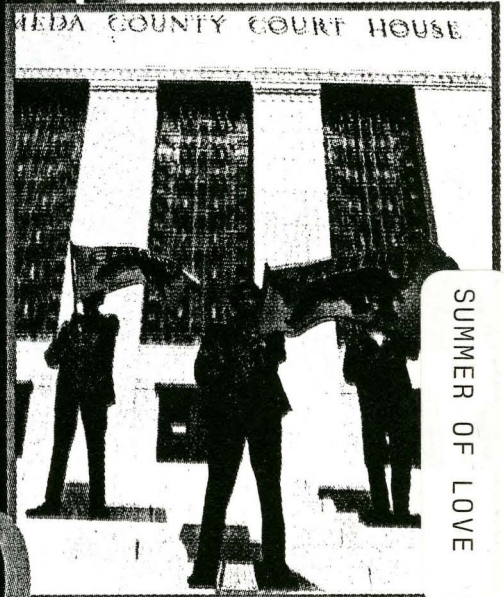
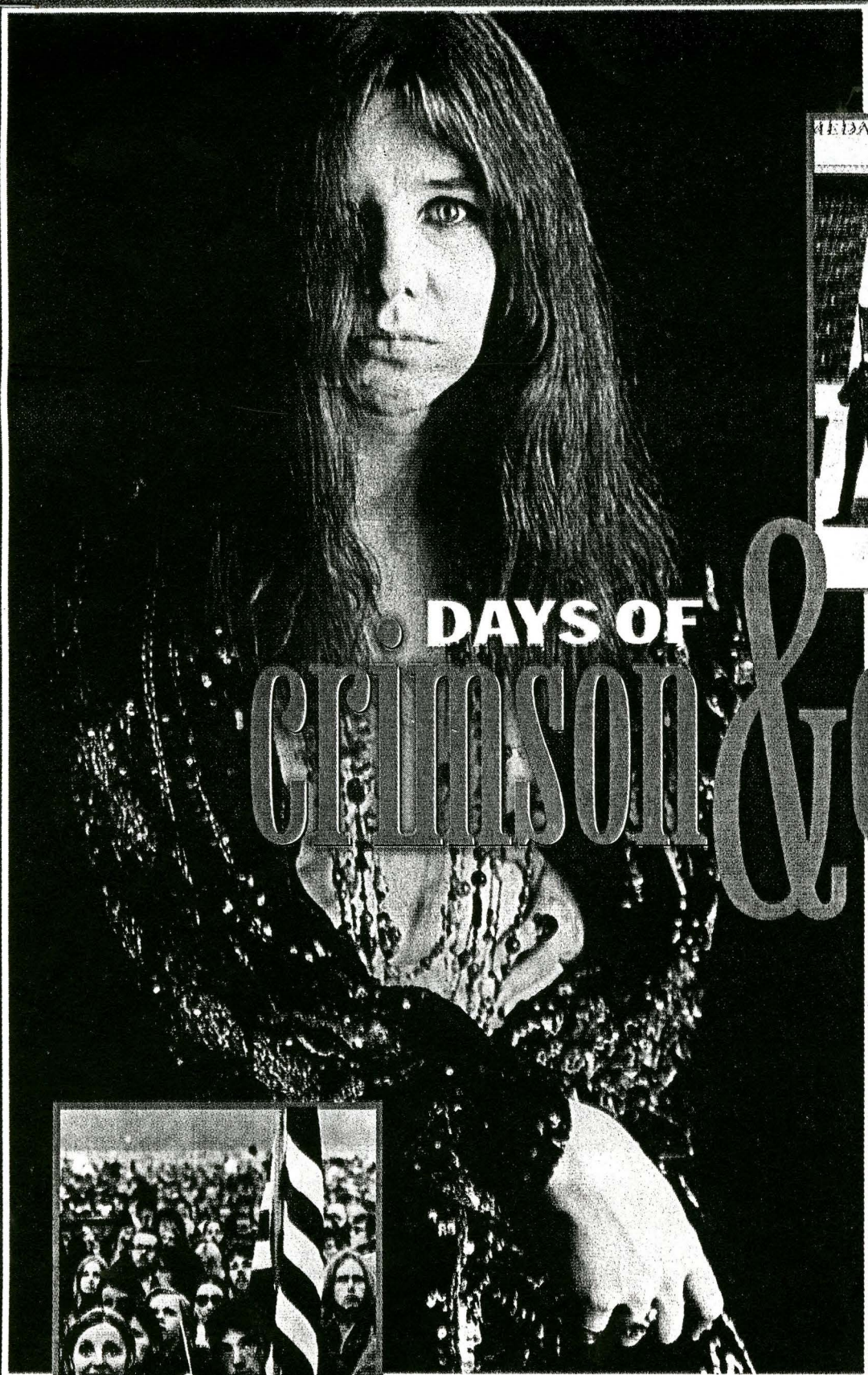


San Francisco
Examiner 7/4/97
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DAYS OF CRIMSON & CLOVER

**ANSEL ADAMS CENTER
REKINDLES S.F.'S
SHINING MOMENT
WITH 30TH
ANNIVERSARY EXHIBIT**

By David Bonetti
EXAMINER ART CRITIC

ON THE 30TH anniversary of the Summer of Love, it is natural to want to commemorate such a signal event in The City's history with an exhibition. Fortunately, San Francisco's documentary photographers were alert to the importance of the cultural changes that were going on locally, and their work has been brought together by Deborah Klochko in an infectious exhibition, "Summer of Love: Revolution and Evolution," that continues through the summer (until Sept. 7) at the Ansel Adams Center, 250 Fourth St.

I came to San Francisco, the first time, in 1969, looking for the Summer of Love. Of course, I was two years too late; on the East Coast, we'd only heard rumors of the decline of the hippie utopia into violence, lethargy and decadence.

I was certainly unaware of the "Death of Hippie" march down Haight Street in

[See SUMMER, D-11]



ABOVE: "JANIS JOPLIN 1967, BIG BROTHER & HOLDING CO.," 1967, BY BOB SEIDEMAN
ABOVE RIGHT: "FREE HUEY RALLY," 1969, BY PIRKLE JONES
LEFT: "KILLED IN VIETNAM," 1969, BY STEPHEN SHAMES

HAIGHT ASHBURY V.F.

◆ SUMMER from D-1

First-hand views of Summer of Love

October 1967, but even if I had heard of it, I would probably still have come. To be in San Francisco at that time was to be where it was happening, even if it was no longer happening in the Haight; and if you wanted to be one with your generation, you came here and dropped acid, as inquiring youths of other generations had gone to Paris or New York to find themselves.

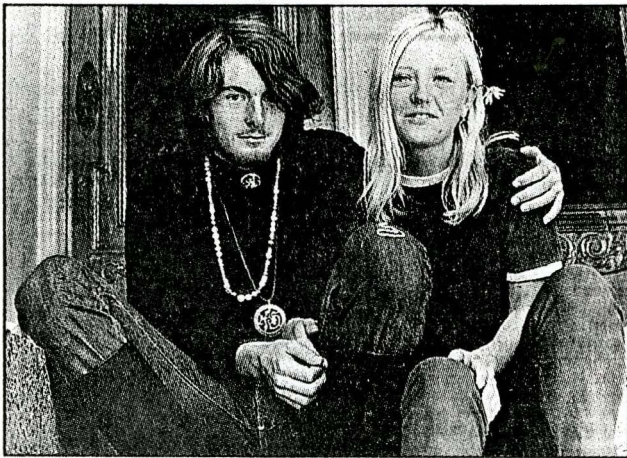
The Summer of Love was San Francisco's great historical moment, a constellation of ideas, events and people that leaped beyond the local to attain the universal and then the mythic. Without it, The City would just be a fun tourist getaway, with its distinctive salad greens, narcissism and fog. With it, it is a city of history, a legendary place, a town where golden girls and boys wear flowers in their hair — forever.

But in 1969 Haight Street was scary: a long, sad row of burnt-out storefronts, drugged-out panhandlers and peril at every corner. I'd been in the fabled neighborhood for only a few minutes when I witnessed a freaked-out former hippie in a drug deal gone bad go on the attack with a knife. A woman I met, the former girlfriend of Tommy James, of Tommy James and the Shondells, as she obsessively repeated, had been raped in broad daylight in one of those storefront entrances, her screams bringing no help from those huddled in their own private nothingness near her.

But it didn't matter that the Haight had succumbed to its own worst instincts. The rest of The City provided the psychedelic playground I had come looking for. By 1969, what San Francisco had stood for was already universal. The world had changed irrevocably; all the old rules were being renegotiated, if not thrown out altogether, and if San Francisco were not responsible for all the changes, it was the impetus and model for many of them.

One of the curious facts is that what was after all a cultural revolution produced so little art of significance, R. Crumb and Zap! Comix being its only resident genius and monument, if such profoundly anti-establishment art can be described in such terms. The music turned out to be piffle — Janis died! "We Built This City on Rock 'n' Roll," indeed. And it produced little literature or visual art of note — psychedelic rock posters have faded in only 30 years into quaint period-pieces, art nouveau's last burp.

Klochko has divided "Summer of Love" into three parts. Part one focuses on the hippie culture that spread out from the Haight to transform the world. Part two explores the political protest — the Free Speech Movement, the anti-war demonstrations and Black Panther activity in Oakland —



Flower power: Ruth-Marion Baruch's "Haight Street," 1969

that gave a heavy dose of reality to the hippie's jejune social consciousness. Part three follows the musicians of the San Francisco Sound and the other rockers who played The City's legendary dance and concert halls.

The first gallery, with the Council for a Summer of Love's pronouncement, "This summer, the youth of the world are making a holy pilgrimage to our city, to affirm and celebrate a new spiritual dawn," on the wall above, fully captures the freshness and the youthfulness of the cultural revolution's participants.

Two fresh-scrubbed girls, pilgrims from Atlanta, stare out at you in a characteristic picture by Elaine Mayes. A young hippie couple, he with a scraggly beard and love beads, she with a daisy behind her ear, posed for Ruth-Marion Baruch on Haight Street in 1969. (In retrospect, they hardly look scary in their innocence.) Leland Rice's "Hippie Commune" reminds you what it was like.

There are some classics of Mario Savio and Berkeley's Free Speech Movement by Nacio Jan Brown from 1964, nicely suggesting that the Summer of Love's stage had been set earlier. And the full treatment of the Black Panthers, by Baruch, Pirkle Jones, Stephen Shames and others, shows

how menacing the Panthers could be when they wanted to be.

Many will be most interested in the music section. Classic Herb Greene images of the Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin and the Grateful Dead mix with others less familiar.

The show has been nicely augmented by hand-decorated clothing, record covers and political buttons of the era. It captures the period broadly, but it is not complete. Not to have included an image of the Cockettes or of any aspect of the nascent gay liberation movement, subsequently so closely identified with San Francisco, was a hobbling omission. (The half million or more who filled Market Street Sunday were the Summer of Love's legacy.)

And the music section is diluted with images taken elsewhere of performers not associated with San Francisco. (George Harrison, reading Bob Dylan's "Don't Look Back," was photographed in London; Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, recording "Let It Bleed," were captured in L.A.; and Jim Morrison, looking like a pre-Raphaelite angel, is shown singing in New York.)

But these are quibbles. If you're feeling nostalgic for a less cynical era, "Summer of Love" should prove a tonic experience.