

SUMMER OF LOVE 20th ANNIVERSARY

Tom SCHONEFELD

July 1987

Official Calendar of Events

Volume 1



'67

Gene Anthony



'87

Jim Taylor

Summer of Love Productions

Memories of the prologue to
"The Summer of Love"

By Arthur Meyer

The summer of love of '67 was four years away, when things were winding down in North Beach and the rental rates were rising, and so I decided to move with two friends. They were both artists and the youngest, Ron Frazier, was my production partner for avant guard stage plays and celebrations then. He is today one of our producers of Summer of Love Productions. The other two producers are Billy McCarthy and Pat Weeks and lets hear it for producers! They are next to never acknowledged by their audiences - as an M.C. would say and I admit to being one for The "now" Summer of Love concerts. Let's give 'em a big hand. So this is the chronicle of the birth of the Haight Ashbury as we came to know and love it.

In 1963 Ron and I went to answer a rental ad in the Examiner. The real estate agent on outer Geary acknowledged the ad but admitted he hadn't the slightest idea where the Haight/Ashbury was. He called someone who told him it was near Kezar Stadium and that it was a 'mixed' neighborhood. I asked him what was the "mix"? "Negro", he answered I replied, "well that 'mix' would be totally appropriate since our third tenant is such a 'mix'. By the way is this rental figure correct - 211 Downey St. at \$82.50 per month? And could the advertised dining room be turned into a third bedroom?" "Why not," he said, "The number of people in the house doesn't matter."

Mr. Real Estate stated that, "\$82.50 was correct but the water and trash would be paid by the landlord."

After moving in, one day, Mama La Beau (that was her name) showed up wearing her red felt hat. She was a handsome black woman about 80 years of age; she held her age nicely. She was rotund and wore spike heels and she said that she was there to greet us, and to invite us for the street cleaning at 11 o'clock, on Saturday when everybody gets out of their Downey St. houses and cleans the two block long street. Mama La Beau exclaimed, "If you have children send them out, but if you don't have children you're going to have to do it on your own." So we were there, on Saturday and a bigger suprise we couldn't hope to have. Mama La Beau was sitting on the back of a convertible that her brother was driving. She had a bull horn and this is the way she greeted her "young'uns" when they came down from the stairs of each of those houses. "All right you guys I know you're in there now! You come on down! Johnny, I see ya' hiding behind that curtain, now you bring that broom down and you come down here to Mama La Beau!", and so it went.

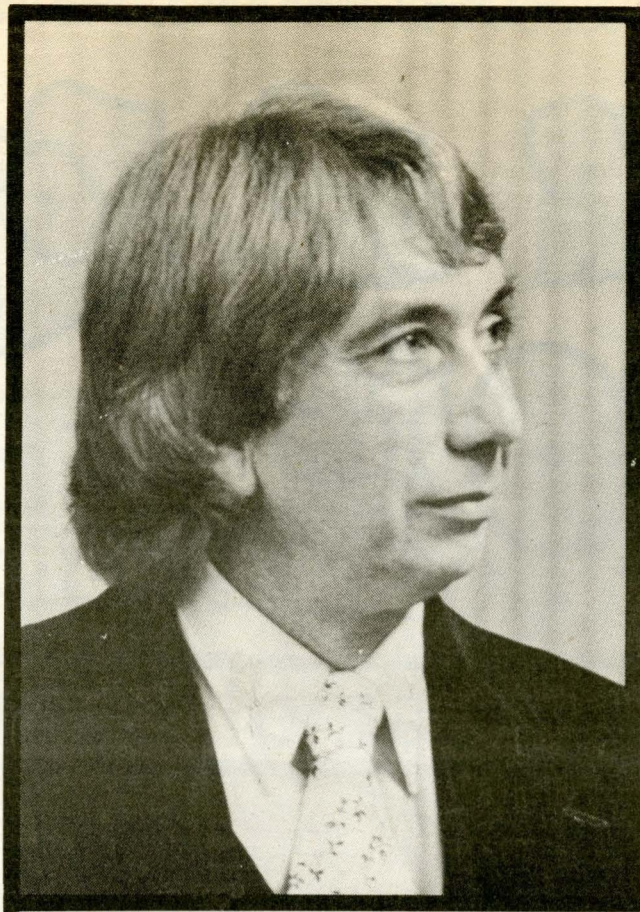
Our producer Ron Frazier and third tenant Langston Bowen sold all their paintings on the Pan Handle of Golden Gate Park. This was the first art show in the Haight and it was a sell-out success.

After a couple of years we witnessed the hybrid Beatniks a few forward aboservers who came dribbling in. We thought they were latter day Beats. They didn't know what they were and when someone named them "Hippies" the show was on and Ron and I did our best to stay out of jail. Our critically acclaimed productions Geese, Pisco's Desire Caught by the Tail and the last San Francisco production of Michael McClure's The Beard were all police - busted for obscenity. The Beard ran with us as its' longest S.F. production at the Encore/Mason St. Theatre. It was Police - busted before its' first run of the show but was not busted during our run. With The Beard our other productions gave the "Hippies" something to think about.

Ron and his bride opened a clothes design center and eleven retail stores and dressed the "Hippies" in leather and beads. The hip generation of the Summer of Love was ready for its opening act.

The Summer of Love

It was magical, mystical,
in many ways
and now it is summer,
and these are the "Good Old Days".



Eric Matteson



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20th Anniversary

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By Walter Medeiros

Walter Medeiros is an historian and lecturer on the San Francisco Rock Poster Art. In 1976 he served as curator for the retrospective exhibition of the rock posters at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

The pilgrimage to the Haight Ashbury was inspired by the image of an attractive lifestyle. This lifestyle of peace, brother-hood and multiple forms of ecstasy was founded on, and promoted by, San Francisco's psychedelic music and the extremely stimulating visual environments of the dance halls. Supporting these performing arts was the graphic art of the dance-concert poster. Like the music, they also spread far and wide, further proclaiming San Francisco as the place where art and liberation flowered. By the "Summer of Love" these intense, involving posters were acknowledged to be the definitive art form of the counterculture, and had begun to penetrate the clean-cut staid profession of commercial art.

Having arisen from very humble circumstances, it was hardly to be expected that the San Francisco posters would have such broad effect -- which of course can be said of the music as well. There was no music industry in the City in 1965 -- it was unthought of. There was an active performing art scene -- electronic music, experimental theatre, and the liquid projection light shows. And there was jazz, folk musicians and several young rock-blues bands who were inspired by the various musical forms of the 1950's, and more recently, the success of Dylan and the Beatles, and dope.

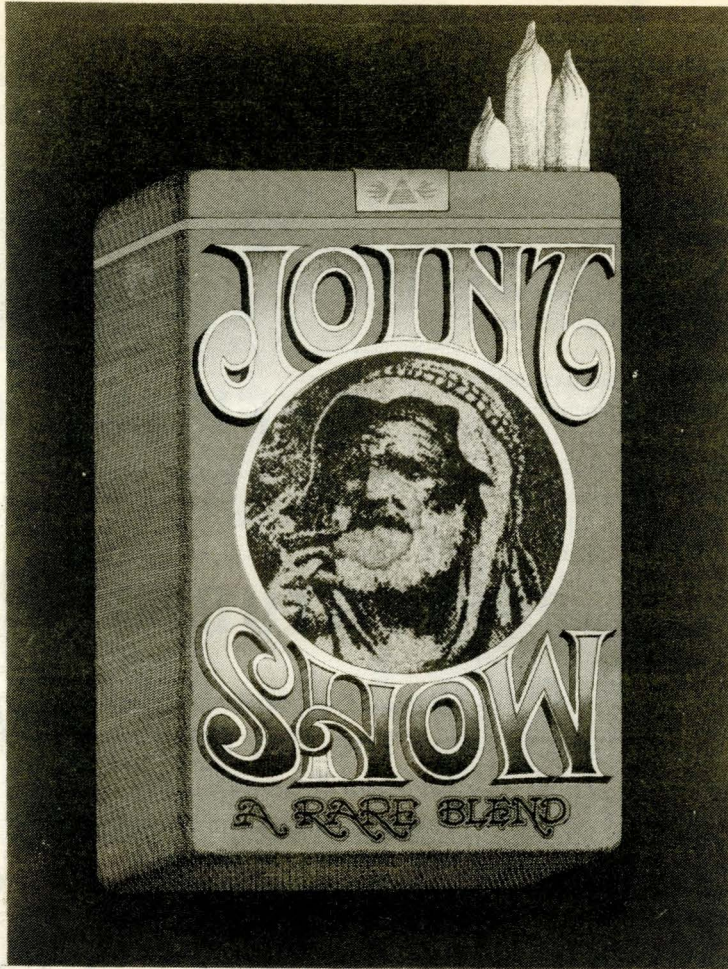
In late '65, when everyone was an amateur, a few enterprising people organized a half dozen rock dances with the local bands. Handbills were the simplest, cheapest form of advertising. Hiring a commercial artist was out of the question, so the dance promoters either made up their own handbills or had them cheaply produced by a certain small printing company. The point is that this low-budget, do-it-yourself approach resulted in graphics created by amateurs within the scene.

These small, rather primitive handbills served to advertise the three day Trips Festival, and several other dance events that brought the scene together in early '66. By March, dance-concerts became regular events, with promoter Bill Graham running the Fillmore Auditorium, and Chet Helms, operating as The Family Dog, at the Avalon Ballroom. Both promoters began using full size posters, and for several months, Wes Wilson, a designer of the early handbills, did the posters for both dance halls.

Certain graphic qualities had already developed in the handbills, such as an earthy, and satirical sense of play, roughly elegant old-fashioned lettering, flowing and intricate decorative form. These were a combination of the artists' personal tastes and the common effects of psychedelic experience. These qualities became standard, and were more fully developed in the full size poster. The artists, Wes Wilson at first, and all the others discussed here, took their art seriously. They constantly strived to improve their designs, to create something personally expressive and relevant to the psychedelized community they served.

This audience was ready for anything -- unreadable lettering was no problem -- and to their credit the music promoters, Graham and Helms, granted a degree of artistic freedom unequalled, before or since. Under these conditions, with imaginative, dedicated artists free to explore and express the experiences and values of this emerging counterculture, the poster art flourished as an organic part of the whole. Like the music, the posters were in the artistic vanguard of cultural consciousness -- something like that -- and their immense popularity was a natural result.

During the first year and a half, as the hippie culture expanded, so did the range and the quality of the poster art. Five major artists emerged, each



bringing their own unique consciousness and graphic style to the new art form. Wes Wilson, who designed the Avalon posters for six months, and the Fillmore posters for over a year, immediately began to explore the surface and spatial effects of dense patterns of lettering. Sometimes the lettering served as a broad, flat background for a three dimensional figure, and sometimes he warped them into abstract, often biomorphic forms. The head was a favorite subject, and later, the female figure. He also sought to approximate the visual effects of psychedelic experience, and his experiments with dense, flowing lettering and hot, contrasting color resulted in a stunning masterpiece of psychedelic art, the "Red Flames" design of July, 1966.

Wilson's April, 1967 "Buffalo Springfield" design, the next to last of his continuous fourteen-month production, shows him at the height of his style. Here the dense lettering serves as flat background, and also swirling, space-defining form. Wilson has a philosophical nature, and the yin-yang, symbolic of duality, is common in his art. Here it forms one end of a dynamic spiral which leads the eye upward to the symbolic male-female head and back again, in an unending cycle.

Alton Kelley and Stanley Mouse, working as Mouse Studios, took over poster design for the Avalon when Wilson quit in mid 1966, and they were a perfect choice. Their playful wit, an eye for the bizarre as well as the beautiful, and an impish irreverence for established notions is characteristic of their art. These qualities fit well with Chet Helms, who took a kind of theatrical-happening approach to his Avalon productions.

For their second Avalon poster Kelley and Mouse produced their famous Zig-Zag trademark ripoff. To encounter this moment of illegal activity posted on the streets was a startling and delightful hit for smokers in the summer of 1966. It was bold also in the appropriation of a trademark and, crossing their fingers, the artists included in the bottom margin "What you don't know about copying and duplicating won't hurt you". Leading the way in another direction, they also produced perhaps the first t-shirt art in the Haight, starting with -- that's right -- the Zig-Zag man.

To Kelley and Mouse all such images were in the public domain, and they felt free to adapt any image to their purposes. One of their most appropriate selections was the skeleton and roses -- an illustration from *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* -- for a Grateful Dead poster, which immediately became the symbol for that band.

Victor Moscoso, who next appeared on the poster scene, was one of the few poster artists with formal academic training. This fine art training at first

seemed a handicap in dealing with the unconventional esthetic standards of the poster art. With determined effort Moscoso eventually found his way, which was through his skill and imagination in the use of color. In late 1966 he produced a series of brilliant posters for the Matrix, a rock club near Union Street. Through the use of highly saturated, hot, contrasting colors these designs can appear to vibrate in certain conditions of light. The edges of form jump and flow, recalling psychedelic vision.

In combination with the techniques of the printing process, Moscoso later developed an even more dynamic use of color. This began with his March '67 design for the Doors gig. In the blinking colored lights of the Avalon Ballroom it was discovered that the red snowflake pattern on the light green face appeared to flash on and off. In several later posters Moscoso fully exploited this effect. He printed, in different colors, two or three images of the same figure in different positions. An illusion of movement, such as flapping wings, was created as the blinking colored lights alternately reflected and deadened each color. The poster, a basically static art form, became animated, recreating in the process a little hit of the active visual environment of the dance halls.

Attracted by the rock posters, in late 1966 Rick Griffin came up from Southern California to try his hand. It was more than adequate. His first poster, for the Psychedelic Shop, led to a commission for the January 1967 "Human Be-In". This poster, which proclaimed "POW-WOW, A gathering of the Tribes", further displayed his excellent draftsmanship. In addition, its Native American imagery and lettering in various old-fashioned styles confirmed that his esthetics were also right on. This poster is a classic document of that event.

Native American culture and nine-teenth-century graphic styles were familiar to Griffin, whose father took him on amateur archeological trips to the Southwest. Griffin also had affection for various product label designs, images that seem created with care, symbolic of quality, and often with a "homey" character related to the family kitchen. For example, the sailor on Players cigarettes, and the Camels package, the Lipton Tea man, the Royal Baking Powder can, and the Sun Maid Raisin girl. One of Griffin's rock posters is a dense assemblage of these and other favorite things, including images from the rock posters, psychedelic substances, and mythic symbols such as the sword in the anvil, and a pearl in an oyster. This poster gives two strong impressions about the artists: a lot of heart, and born to draw.



Griffin's attraction to vintage commercial art and his love of drawing -- and good weed, apparently -- resulted in his production of several playful dope ad posters. One, advertising "Can-A-Blis Pipe and Cigarette Tobacco", contains finely drawn and beautifully colored smoking paraphernalia -- the "tobacco" can, an old-fashioned cigarette rolling device, an opium pipe, and some very untobacco-looking foliage. Another poster, also in full color, depicts an ornately decorated brass hookah beside an elaborately lettered Moroccan phrase in praise of kief.

Such puns and dope references often appear in his early Avalon posters, but for the 4th of July 1976, he created the first of many designs which contain more serious commonplace and symbolic imagery. Combined with the central patriotic crest, surmounted by an eagle, are religious and metaphysical symbols. The eagle holds the Greek letters alpha and omega, and the ribbon in its beak contains that prophecy from the Book of Revelations. Below is the eye in the triangle from the Great Seal, found on the dollar bill. The design is enclosed in a strong, finely detailed Renaissance frame. It's a very impressive emblem, and the drawing is so crisp and solid it appears as a metal plaque.

Griffin's affection ran deep. He took this occasion of a design for our most important holiday very seriously, and got high on imagery related to the spiritual-political principles of America. This was not an uncommon sentiment: many in the Haight-Ashbury shared a faith that the "new age" proclaimed by the Founding Fathers was just about to dawn.

The summer of '67 was a high point in the careers of the first five poster artists. Wilson's self-confidence had recently led him to quit making posters and attempt to shift into fine art career. Kelley and Mouse had designed the cover of the Grateful Dead's first album, Mouse himself was running his Haight Street head shop, called Pacific Ocean Trading Company, or POT Co. And within the previous six months both Moscoso and Griffin had emerged as masters of the poster art. All were local celebrities, soon to be seen in *Life*.

The quality and quantity of this new art had attracted some interest in conventional art circles, and in July a combined exhibition for the five artists, which they called a "Joint Show", opened at the Moore Gallery on Sutter Street. Each artist created a special poster for this event and, true to form, Griffin used a classic image from advertising art as a pun on the exhibition title.

By this time posters were big business. Personality posters -- blow-ups of film

stars and other celebrities -- were already popular as part of the Pop Art sensibility then in fashion. In September, Life magazine reported on this poster boom. Every major city had a poster shop, and even Macy's was dealing them. As life pointed out, the boom involved posters of every description: political, gags, and fine art, etc. But the article features the San Francisco artists, and from the accompanying photos it's apparent that psychedelic posters are what is new and significant.

There's little doubt that the surge in poster popularity started in San Francisco. Since early '66 people had been taking the rock posters from the streets and installing them on their walls as art, and as an expression of their new cultural identity. Bill Graham tells of going around town posting them in those early days, and a few hours later finding many of them already gone.

This local popularity was the leading edge of a wave, or rather a high tide of San Francisco music and art that spread over North America and across the pond to Britain and Western Europe. Besides the extensive sales of the rock posters -- hundreds of thousands of them were wholesaled to poster shops -- there was widespread adoption of the San Francisco style. Rock clubs and musical events had also mushroomed, and posters were the mode of advertising. The San Francisco influence shows up in local posters from California (especially the Bay Area) to New York and Boston, from Texas to Michigan, and in Britain too. The lettering styles of all the San Francisco artists were copied, but by far the most popular was the dense, blocky lettering developed by Wilson. Though rarely used with its original intensity, it became an international style, the hallmark of turned-on, happening graphic art.

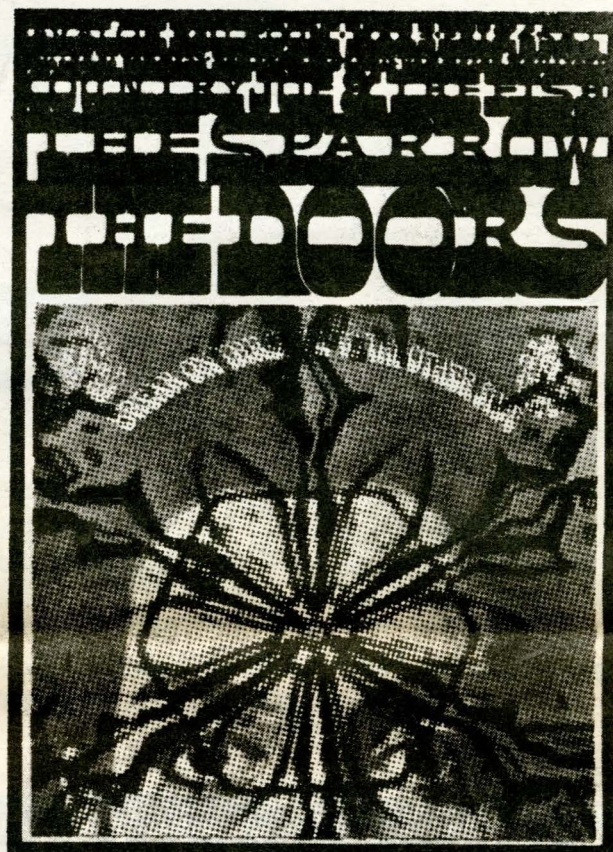
The styles of the rock posters naturally spread to related industries. In youth-oriented journals such as music magazines, Playboy, etc., advertisements and layout graphics took on then handmade decorative styles of the poster art. The most direct and lasting effect was on album cover art. All the artists except Wilson soon designed album covers, but the basic influence was the general revival of the handmade art. In the technology boom of the 1950s the hand of the graphic artists virtually disappeared as commercial art was taken over by the more impersonal medium of photography and straight forward typeset lettering, which greatly limited custom design and decorative effects. That medium still dominates, of course, but even through the recent hard-edge fashions of Punk and Neo-Art Deco, the handmade tradition has survived. Symmetrical designs, fine airbrush work, the currently popular chrome lettering -- all of this derives in some way from the graphic revolution that began on kitchen tables in low rent Frisco flats.

The first five artists continued to design posters intermittently for about another year, then the posters passed into entirely new hands. The Avalon remained open until the end of 1968, and the Fillmore until the middle of 1971. Both continued to produce posters until they closed, providing the opportunity for another half-dozen significant artists to develop, along with a quantity of lesser talent.

Many other clubs and dance events came and went during the five-and-a-half years of the San Francisco poster movement, all with their posters. But few other posters, anywhere, matched -- and none surpassed -- the quality of art produced by the best Fillmore and Avalon artists. And in the later years there were high times in the dance halls and among the poster artists, but it never again got as hot as in those days that brought the "Summer of Love".

IN THE NEWS.... THE FAMILY DOG

Some of San Francisco's most famous sixties posters are in the news again. The Family Dog posters created for Avalon promoter Chet Helms by the "Big Five" sixties poster artists (Wes Wilson, Alton Kelly, Stanley Mouse, Victor Moscoso, and Rick Griffin) are currently the subject of a court action. The controversy centers on the rights to the artwork. Pitting Helms against the artists. We will print updates on this litigation in future issues.



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Calendar

*Saturday, June 13th
KBC Band and The Looters
 S.F. Food Bank benefit
 Golden Gate Park - Bandshell San Francisco

*Sunday, June 21st
All Beings Parade & Community Celebration
 Golden Gate Park, Panhandle
 Haight & Central Sts. San Francisco

*Sunday, June 21st
60's Meets The 80's Multi-Media Concert
 The I-Beam
 1748 Haight St. San Francisco

*June 20th - 29th
60's Retrospective Movie Series
 Red Victorian Movie House
 1659 Haight St. San Francisco

*July 1st - 11th
"Artistic Visions" Art Show
 Park Branch Library
 1833 Page St. San Francisco

July 20th - Sept. 7th
"The Sixties" - Movies Series
 U.C. Theatre
 2036 University Ave. Berkeley

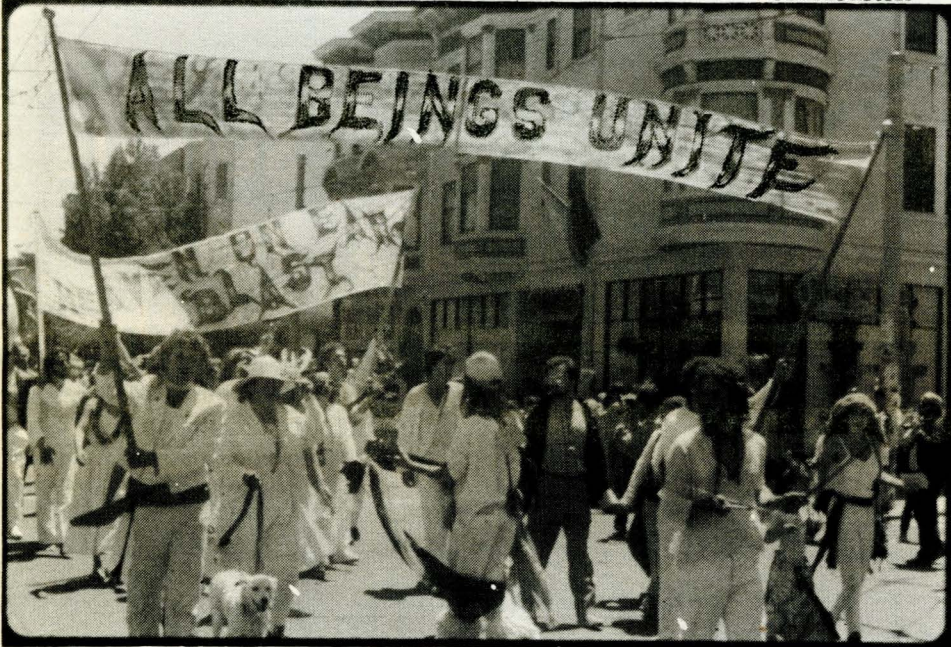
Sunday, July 26th
20th Anniversary Chalk-In & Community Celebration
 Golden Gate Park - Panhandle
 San Francisco

August 7, 8 & 9th
Multi-Image Slide Show
 by Gene Anthony
 Oakland Museum

Saturday, August 15th
Farewell to the Piscean Age Party
 Golden Gate Park - Bandshell
 San Francisco

Saturday, September 12th
The Celebration of The 20th Anniversary of The Summer of Love
 Golden Gate Park - Polo Field
 San Francisco

Tom Houston



ALL BEINGS PARADE

"The strangest combination of ingredients I've ever seen" - commented one Haight Ashbury resident while viewing the passing array of colorful, humorous and imaginative costumes and creatures. Spectators lined Haight Street as the 1500 parade participants, led by the San Francisco Mime Troup, danced, strolled and sang their way along Haight and down Cole to the Panhandle, where simultaneous performances on three stages entertained the crowd into the afternoon. Rosie Radiator and her World Champion Marathon Tap Dancers, the Gorilla Choir, National Dance Champs Gary and Gloria Poole, mimes, jugglers, poets, acrobats, Samba dancers, and a wide array of musical performers created a joyful and festive atmosphere as the crowd basked in the sunshine and the music... "It really felt like the Sixties again".



KBC BAND

The producers of the Celebration of the 20th Anniversary of the Summer of Love, the San Francisco Food Bank and the people of San Francisco would like to thank the members of the KBC Band, their manager Vincent Lynch, the Looters and KRQR Radio for making the June 13th benefit concert possible. A big thank you also to Peter Ashe and the San Francisco Department of Parks and Recreation. The free concert drew 10,000 people to the Bandshell in Golden Gate Park and collected more than 8,000 pounds of food for the hungry and homeless of San Francisco. What better way to open the 20th Anniversary of the Summer of Love! The music was hot, the crowd was great and the cause was worthwhile - everything was perfect. As Paul Kantner said at the end of the show - "See you on September 12th at the Polo Field!"



PAUL KANTNER - KBC BAND
 SATURDAY, June 13, 1987
 Golden Gate Park

Summer of Love/KRQR Event By Suzanne Danforth

SD: Basically, 60's meets the 80's - what's going on today that was culturally innovated in the 60's?

PK: Food Banks, supporting other people, the needy, music, sex, drugs and Rock & Roll, all that stuff. Freedom.

SD: What do you think served as the awakening process?

PK: Our educations, we're probably the best educated generation in the history of the world, they expected us to take all the stupidity after educating us. I can't see how they're going to educate you and think you'll put up with all the bullshit. Like an IQ test or something...and everybody here has not failed.

SD: The New Age thinking - did it come out of the 60's?

PK: That's sort of a hackneyed phrase now. Lots came out of the 60's - everything from The Sierra Club to the Women's Movement, Gay Pride, Black Power, Chicanos - all the freedom - liberation kind of movements. They were there before, but they sort of got an explosive kick in the butt to stand up and stick your head out. Everybody stuck their heads up and they didn't get shot off, so here we are now. Some people got it shot off - relatively few.

SD: Do you think there is a youth movement today?

PK: Not a cohesive one. There never was, really.

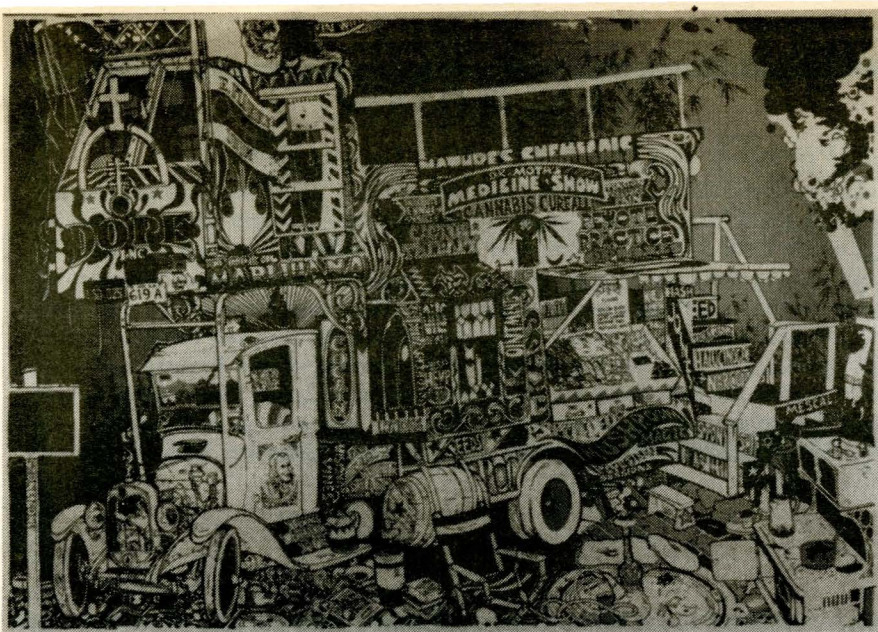
SD: You don't think it was cohesive then?

PK: No, not at all. It appeared that way to the outside. But no, it was like Israel; if all the Arabs were gone, Israel would kill themselves. The same thing is true of the Rock & Roll generation, or whatever you want to call them. So many people getting in so much shit that its sort of comfortable to stick together. Wolf pack, sort of. It looks that way from the outside. There are as many factions within what you call the New Age community as there are in the...Old Age Community.

Its not latent, a whole bunch of people got arrested out in Concord for resisting, something or other, a weapons facility. So, no. In the 60's, we played in a thing down in Nevada where they were doing nuclear testing - everybody got arrested out there.

SD: Did you get arrested?

PK: No, we were playing. If you're in the band, you don't get arrested, that's the secret, don't tell anybody else though. We got to play for them as they were getting arrested.



60's Meets the 80's:

An interview with Allen Cohen

By Suzanne Danforth

Allen Cohen, co-founder and editor of the underground newspaper's, underground newspaper, "The Oracle," came to California in 1963. As a young writer/poet searching for poetic roots, San Francisco's Beat enclave was a natural starting point for literary genealogy. "Unfortunately," recalls Cohen, "the Beats were gone so I moved over to the Haight Ashbury with a friend of mine."

At the time, the Haight Ashbury was a lower rent, diversified and fairly non-unique area. There were artists, blacks, musicians, families and former students, some factions of which, as time went on, slowly "diverged into a sort of artistic bohemia," Cohen noted recently in a phone interview.

In 1965, into this growing community, Owsley Stanley made his appearance on the scene. A former chemistry student, Stanley manufactured large quantities of good quality, white market, LSD. There quite possibly could never have been an Owsley Stanley, or "The Sixties" as we think we know them, without the CIA initiated government studies on psychopharmaceuticals a few years before. By '65, Tim Leary, Harvard's enigma, was gone from there and at Millbrook; Ken Kesey had left Perry Lane for the life of a Prankster; and Allen Ginsberg had long since written "Lysergic Acid" in chilling response to his first dose in a medically masked CIA experiment. Cohen had already had an LSD experience when a friend got some from U.C. Medical Center.

At the same time, the anti-war movement was evolving and the Civil Rights movement had been active for years. In Berkeley, the Free Speech Movement was generating political action and spawning natural children like the Poetry Conference, a very influential happening among poets and writers in the area. "We had an intellectual bohemian culture forming as a result of the Beat influence, experiments in mind altering drugs, and resistance to the war," Cohen laughs, "and other social diseases."

LSD, in particular, took the "momentum and introduced people to areas of vision and transcendence that hadn't been prominent in America since the 19th Century through Emerson, Whitman, and Melville." Cohen draws a strong parallel between

the time known as the Summer of Love and the Transcendental Literary movement by noting people "all living at the same time, in the same area, with an ideas of the transcendental aspects of human consciousness."

It was in these times that Allen Cohen, Michael McClure and Ron Thelin began to put together "The Oracle," after Allen had a dream of people around the world reading a newspaper with rainbows on it. True to his vision, "The Oracle" had rainbows, among other innovations, and published from 1966 -1968 on Haight Street. Printing stopped only when the Haight Ashbury was under siege from the factions that invaded as a result of its success. At that time, Cohen, and many others, retreated to communal living on the land.

He came back to the city in 1975 to participate again in the life of the world and do the work he felt necessary to do, artistically and in the peace movement.

This summer, Cohen is collaborating, with many other individuals and groups, in the production of the Summer of Love events. These events, importantly, are not an exercise in nostalgia, rather they are an antidote to the yearning for meaning and purpose that everyone in society senses. "People Magazine, Life Magazine, all the networks, all the newspapers, are doing Sixties stories because they sense in their readers, and in themselves, a need for the passions and purpose that was the Sixties, in particular the values: peace, love and community."

It is with this perspective that Cohen recently spoke about those changes wrought by the Sixties which are still at work today.

In looking at publications which approach what was pioneered with "The Oracle," two that Cohen would say are related, in terms of design and innovation, are "USA Today" and "Omni" magazine. No publication, however, utilizes the non-linear design of the Oracle. "This was an idea that came out of our general rebellion and perception of how we were addicted to the bad news in the papers, and an aesthetic sense of breaking up - the universe is round and curvilinear, and here we are continued on p. 11



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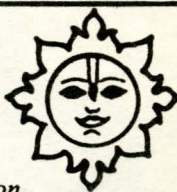
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The few years of calm, before the intensity of the Vietnam War took place and grew. That period of a semblance of Peace was called The Hippy Years. The Peaceful Years. The Years of Peace. The Years of Love-Ins. Flowers. The Wearing of Bells and Beads. Psychedelic Light Shows at Rock Concerts. The Birth of the Age of Rock Music. Painted Faces. Day Glow Painted Bodies. Nudity. Incense, Hugging, Warmth. A True Feeling of Brotherhood. A "Dropping-Out" (of society and its' values and it's norms), and "Turning-On" (to all types of euphorics, mostly marijuana "POT"), and a lot of Sex...a lot of Sex!

It was as though a fringe element of Society was turning its' back on the conflicts of a war (Vietnam) that it could not and would not believe was happening. They totally refused to accept this insane action by a supposed sophisticated country, who "knew of better ways" to deal with such global political spasms! The Hippies totally rejected and negated it! Thus they "dropped out" - refusing to interact with it on its' level; this totally baffled "The Established Powers That Be" and threw them into a total quagmire of inaction - they didn't know how to deal

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JUDY GILMAN

with this new type of quasi political "non-action."

It was extremely effective. Multi-thousands of youths refused to participate in the governments machinery No soldiers, no wars-was the theroy!

There was a sort of Mystical reaction and disenchantment, a total refusal to comply with authority at any level. Our Forefathers would have been proud. Ghandi would have rejoiced. A total refusal to fall into the line like a cog in a wheel. This brought out the need to re-identify with others who believed in the same new credo of brotherhood, and bought out strange, colorful (if ostentatious) dress, and a desire to emit a warm open loving feeling!

The Hippies, though directly non-political in action, had made it clear in there refusal to be involved and said "enough of Societis' Mayhem, Scrutiny, Misjudgements" and what they felt were "a total lack of values in a Society from the top to the bottom of the social scale. Enough! We Drop Out! Here! and Now!"

Thats the lowdown on the 60's and I started the San Francisco Exotic-Erotic Ball to bring the Love-Ins into the 80's and through to the 90's. The spirit of Hippy Philosophy is still very much alive.

This is an excerpt from Louis Abolafia's book, "The Hippy Years". Louis, "The Love Candidate" for president in 1968, started the Love-Ins (New York, May 3, 1967) and is now co-producer of San Francisco's famed Exotic-Erotic Halloween Ball.

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world-renowned spiritual community in northern Scotland. Or the members of the Bay Area chapter of the Association for Humanistic Psychology may be learning about the latest research in neuropsychology, hypnosis or self-programming. On other evenings, groups may be discussing computer networking, ecology, peace initiative or world citizenship.

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The Red Victorian Hotel houses, as its spiritual and artistic heart, the Gallery of Visual Poetry paintings. Sami Sunchild, owner and artist-in-residence, has been a painter all her life, having exhibited on three continents. since her calligraphic paintings have as their subject matter the thoughts we think, and since Sami offers these to people who wish to fill their minds with valuable thoughts of their own choosing, the corridor, Gallery and Pink Parlour have been especially created as places for people to enjoy the paintings. Visual Poetry is variously regarded as Affirmations, Mantras, Prayers or selected programs for human consciousness. Please ask at our office for a CATALOG OF PAINTINGS and prices.

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Calvin Welch - longtime Haight resident and community activist -

Interviewed by Suzanne Danforth - June, 1987 - 409 House.

**Calvin Welch - longtime Haight resident and community activist
Interviewed by Suzanne Danforth
June 12, 1987 - 409 House**

SD: When did you come to San Francisco?

CW: 1962...To go to San Francisco State University.

SD: What vestiges of the Summer of Love are left in the Haight specifically that might be different from the rest of the country?

CW: Folks. People, types of people, are the only living, enduring remnant of the Summer of Love.

SD: The only?

CW: Yeah. They didn't build great edifices, all the busses are gone. If you stretch a point, you could say the Free Medical Clinic and the 409 House, and the Switchboard are the institutions that were founded during that period and that have survived. That's about it. You can't really say there is - a band, with the possible exception of the Grateful Dead. All the bands have fundamentally changed. So, there are the people.

SD: How about nationally? Things which have been absorbed into the culture?

CW: Nationally, there would probably be some memories, there are no national institutions. There was an attitudinal change, but in terms of any kind of enduring values, that's pretty much on an individual basis. So, again, for me, it comes down to people.

SD: So, you agree with the Bay Guardian article that was just written, Love wasn't enough.

CW: Oh. No. We haven't gotten there yet. The question is what are the enduring aspects - it's people in this neighborhood, around this country who feel that something happened here. There was in a classical anthropological sense, no physical culture of the hippies that endured.

SD: How about societal reforms then.

CW: Well, that's a meaty question. The Hippies did not like Ronald Reagan. Ronald Reagan is now president of the United States, ergo, something else happened to those people. There was no hippie politics; there was a particular lifestyle and value system that when you really look deeply at it, was a variant of capitalistic consumerism. There was no really economic attitudes, or economic analysis, it was very here and now, it was very inwardly, personally directed. And its enduring impact,

and I don't mean to minimize it all, I think it's very significant, I think I'm an example. Individuals. It's the lives, the lessons, the social conclusions that one made during that period. Principally a very transitional transitory journey.

SD: So everybody just ... came back?

CW: People were at best motivated to seek their own truths. The slogan was not tune in, turn on, drop out, it was do your own thing. There was a real libertarian kind of strain to it, very highly individualistic strain to it. I think an awful lot of people who look back on that time don't want to put it into any kind of historical context. Charles De Gaulle was overthrown basically by the French Students in May of 1968. There was a world-wide youth movement at that time. And there was that real transitional period. And I really do see the Summer of Love and the hippie phenomena in that context. I think it resulted, for some people more than others, in a kind of permanent shift in values, the definition 'what was of value'.

SD: What of the New Age stuff lately, it's kind of media oriented, kind of isolated ...

CW: Well, the hippie thing was awfully, awfully media oriented. Nobody called themselves hippies, they were called hippies, it WAS a media invention.

SD: But, it wasn't as isolated as New Age seems to be.

CW: No. The most extraordinary thing for me was the incredible role that popular music played. Tens of thousands of people listened to the same music at the same time and concluded the same thing. That was all done in the mind, and therefore far more moving, far more real than music videos, which really limit the possible interpretations. When you see it visually all worked out for you, its far less different than if you had invented it. And far less wonderful than if you individually have invented the same vision that simultaneously 20,000 other people have invented. That was the most amazing thing for me during that period. I happened to go on a bit of a world tour of my own in the summer of '67.

SD: You weren't here then?

CW: I was here. I left in June and went into Western Europe and ended up in East Africa by the end of '67. That's why I can never think of that time solely in terms of what was happening in the Haight Ashbury and the United States. It was an interna-

tional phenomenon. There were people who looked like me who spoke a variety of different languages who listened to the same music and the remarkable thing was basically, reached the same kinds of conclusions about the war, about the state of Western Civilization, the rejection of the whole 50's mentality that was still operative, this odd kind of xenophobic paranoia that is so manifested in a Richard Nixon, and Charles De Gaulle, and a Stalinist Checkoslovakian regime, all which were overthrown during that period. Not Richard Nixon, he won. But it was the sense of a liberating experience. It was truly a liberating experience. And you know, the thing of liberty, or about liberty, is that it only lasts if you use it. THE COST OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE.

We've got to keep pushing. That's easy to do when you're 18, it becomes a lot more difficult to do when you're 38. Far from looking at the international scene or looking at the future with dread in 1968, which I'm afraid is the view that current youth have of the future and of the international scene, in 1967-1968, the future was ours and the world was a friendly place. It was not a hostile place because you could see that what you were going through here was happening in Western Europe, Asia, Eastern Europe. There was a sense of an international youth solidarity in its purest form, almost a collective unconscious.

It wasn't an organized thing; it was a very spontaneous coming together of a people and history in a moment. It was assisted by various mind altering substances. It was assisted by a technology that enabled the world to look at each other through television. It was certainly assisted by the technology of popular music that had not quite developed to the level of centralization or corporate control that exists now. But in that brief, kind of window of time everything was possible, nothing was impossible. There was a sense of oneness, that was the desired psychic state - oneness with the past, the present, the future - with all people and the earth. That's what tons of acid was ingested to try to produce. That's what most of the poetry and a great deal of the individuality that was very popular at that time was aimed at. I lived here before the hippies, I lived in this neighborhood after, and there was a split by 1970 - split between those folks who felt that the ethic required a rural setting. That it could not be done in a city. The city required too many compromises, the city was simply too many hassles. What you have to understand, certainly in '67-'68, the hippies were an overwhelmingly white, middle class phenomenon. By '69-'70, working class kids, less well educated kids, had adopted that lifestyle and "the scene", "the

trip" changed with all of the reality, especially in an urban area -looking back now, that was pretty obvious at the very beginning. And the whole trip over trying to reach oneness, over trying to reach this sense of spiritual enlightenment in an urban setting, and a whole chunk of folks decided it couldn't be where the tire met the road in this country. If change was truly to be affected then it would have to be able to be perfected in real life and for me that meant urban life. That meant trying to find a way to live a non-exploitive life, to try to build a community, a sense of community, a sharing and together kind of vision of that summer, 365 days a year in a real life setting, in an urban area.

It seemed to me kind of self indulgent, at the least, and cheating at the worst, to go off into the boonies and create some Manson Village or Jim Jones Village or for that matter, New Town that Gaskin produced. I don't think Gaskin's experiment turned out the way he thought it was going to, or had in mind. One of the interesting things about the Farm was in its adolescence, it decided to form a foundation and go back to the inner city. They formed "Plenty" and tried to affect changes in the East Bronx and so forth, which I think, in many ways, was the grown up hippie coming back to their real roots. It was an urban phenomena, and it just got too complex for folks to deal with. A large number who, by background and breeding, were unable to deal with the city, basically fled.

The enduring results in the Haight Ashbury are people, and attitudes of people. This is a very special neighborhood in many, many ways. I lived in this neighborhood 5 years before 1967, and it was a different neighborhood. People certainly didn't have much consciousness of being in a special place. After 1967, there was, and is, to this day - a sense that the myth that was created that summer is kind of a self fulfilling myth. Since '67, people have come back here looking for 1967 and in that way they sustain that search, that "trip" for finding a special place that cares about other people, that respects diversity, and is open and inquisitive and that is a place for experimental activity which first started occurring during that summer. At one level it never stopped, and the neighborhood never again was like it was before it happened. You can't point to any physical manifestation, it's in people.

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The Sixties Meets the Eighties: An Interview with Allen Cohen

reading all this stuff in rectangles and lines."

From a sociological outlook, Cohen acknowledges the introduction of a drug culture to mainstream America. He also quietly acknowledges that people take drugs because they have pain. Sometimes, it is a spiritual pain, but more often, "on a widespread basis, it's psychological and social pain coming from a society and upbringings that aren't beneficial to human development."

Cohen notes the wide split between the rich and the poor, the middle class and the poor on one hand, and a dropping from the middle class into poverty on the other. "The use of drugs is an attempt by people to help relieve themselves of the pain, while at the same time, two of the worst drugs in terms of social and physical harm, alcohol and tobacco, are legal." If our institutions would address human need and peace, he believes that the drug culture would disappear and we would in turn see diminished control by America in Latin American countries' cocaine rings, allowing the region to return to sane government.

As for vestiges of the Sixties still at work today in the Haight, Cohen sees a community of activists which still have a bohemian draw across the country. "People still think - 'I'm going to the Haight Ashbury,' especially some of the runaways who want to get away, and the talented kids looking for a place to go where they will find fellow beings who are interested in art and literature and adventure."

In the 1980's, the human potential movement is also moving into the mainstream, and New Age thinking is directly related to what happened in the Sixties. Even with the tragedy of today's sexually transmitted diseases, there remains a freeing up of sexuality as a more acceptable part of our lives, a resistance to war and intervention, and a practical idealism existing in the peace movement. The Women's Liberation Movement also came out of the Sixties. "Women were being treated, even in the political movements, as inferior until they started to collectively wake up in 1969 and say 'Hey, we're talking about liberation here - what about our own liberation?'"

Cohen points to the ecology movement and the interest in the environment "as a direct view of our kinship with all of being." It arose from a feeling of the interrelationship with the world, and with nature, through the use of LSD and the heightened awareness of the fragility of our planet at the hands of humankind.

The Sixties also helped to create that genre known popularly as Yuppies. "Some rejected their past and others didn't. They're in the mainstream of society trying to do the best they can - organizing, or bringing more life and compassion and mercy into their places of being." He sees the baby boomers as spread out all over society affecting change from within. An event such as the invasion of Nicaragua, or severe recession or depression of the economy, would trigger off the necessary elements affecting a movement; a social recipe which calls for an aesthetic breakthrough, such as the Beat's provided in the late 50's and a social breakdown like the Vietnam War in the 60's. "Once the right wing reaction fades away the changes are going to occur from inside, unless there is some sort of tremendous upsurge like a whole society dedicated to an insane genocidal war."

Allen Cohen continues to write poetry - his most recent book is entitled The Reagan Poems - and in addition to working with the Summer of Love Productions this summer, he is showing a San Francisco Oracle Slide Show to the public. He also continues working to right the tremendously alienating problems in our society by trying to (re) establish those values of the Sixties, and by fanning the flames where they already exist.

Beyond The Valley of The Big Chill

By Paul Krassner

Lenny Bruce would have appreciated the irony of folks buying the soundtrack album from a film biography, with him being portrayed by Dustin Hoffman, complaining about the district attorney doing his act.

"What I really want," Lenny once told me, "is to do my act before the Supreme Court."

His first arrest for obscenity took place in San Francisco in December, 1962. That victimless crime served as an early contraction in the birth of a counter-culture.

There came an evolutionary jump in consciousness. People began to trust their friends more than the government. Horrified by legalized dehumanization, they saw a linear connection between putting kids in jail for smoking flowers and bombing them with napalm on the other side of the world.

There had to be an alternative to a value-system epitomized by such rituals as the three-martini lunch and Walter Cronkite's every Thursday evening delivery of the body count from Vietnam: American dead and "enemy" dead.

The CIA had tried to employ LSD as a vehicle of control, but their scenario backfired when millions of young rebels used the psychedelic as a catalyst to help deprogram themselves from a sadomasochistic society.

Socrates had said, "know thyself." Norman Mailer amended that to, "Be thyself." The hippies took it a step further - to, "Change thyself."

More and more, they observed the difference between what they experienced on the street and the way it was reported in the mainstream media, thus giving rise to underground papers across the country.

Allen Cohen, editor of the Oracle, changed his name to Siddartha and joined a commune, where they all called him Sid.

Music-makers - Jimi Hendrix, the Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe and the Fish, the Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin and Big Brother and the Holding Company -- became the new priesthood of a spiritual revolution. Mort Sahl remarked that you needed a translator to read the concert posters.

When Michael McClure's The Beard opened at the Actor's Workshop, it was closed by the police, who arrested the cast for "lewd and dissolute conduct in a public place." During the trial, the ACLU successfully defended the play by having it performed in the courtroom. Lenny Bruce's fantasy had come true by proxy.

The sexual revolution was won, but now it has been lost in the AIDS crisis. Children of the '80s will be asking their parents, "Tell us about promiscuity..."

We have indeed come a long way, baby, since Ken Kesey was not allowed to donate blood because he had ingested acid.

A couple of decades ago, marijuana cost \$10 an ounce. Now it's \$300, although the THC content is several times higher.

Zig-Zag rolling papers are now sold in supermarkets, rung up electronically via the universal price code stripes. Cheech and Chong have become rich making dope movies seen by audiences too stoned to read the bad reviews.

Now a student reads about Malcom X and asks the teacher, "Who was Malcolm the Tenth?"

Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin debate the Yuppies vs. the Yuppies and Tim Leary debates G. Gordon Liddy, who once raided his drug research headquarters, using that arrest as a stepping stone in his career, from assistant D.A. to the FBI to the CIA to the Watergate Plumbers to Miami Vice to Password.

Muzak versions of Stone songs can be heard on elevators, and the Beatles are being used to sell Nike sneakers. The Byrds are selling Time magazine, and Frye Boots are selling that whole decade itself.

Youngsters who once held mirrors up to cameras at the windows of a Haight-Ashbury tourist bus guided by a driver trained in sociological significance are now entrepreneurs and advertise on Muni with posters advising, "Shop the Haight."

Those who once accepted a pill from a stranger merely because he had appropriate vibes are now a paranoid about the Tylenol killer.

The '60s are gone and they will never return, but the seeds we planted then are continuing to blossom. Between the global village and decentralization, there was a sense of community that turned so-called dropouts into humanistic activists, and that legacy will never be destroyed.



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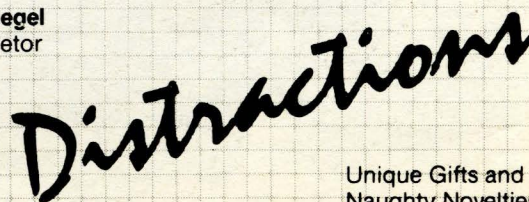
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