

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SAN FRANCISCO ROCK: THE SUMMER OF LOVE

Week One: The Roots of the San Francisco Sound & The Birth of Underground San Francisco Rock

Recommended Listening:

The Beau Brummels, *The Best of the Beau Brummels* (Rhino, 1987). Good 18-song survey of the San Francisco band that was the first to combine the Beatles with some elements of acoustic folk, most famously on their hits "Laugh Laugh" and "Just a Little." They had plenty of other good songs in the mid-1960s, some of the ones on this CD including "Sad Little Girl" and the small hit "You Tell My Why."

The Beau Brummels, *Turn Around: The Complete Recordings 1964-1970* (Now Sounds, 2021) The Beau Brummels recorded a staggering amount of material in the 1960s, much of which wasn't released until decades later. It can be found on numerous compilations, but this eight-CD, 228-track box set is the best and most thorough of the lot. In addition to much of their official 1964-68 output, it has quite a few rarities and previously unissued cuts, with a high quality maintained even on most of the recordings that didn't see release at the time.

Big Brother & the Holding Company, *Live in San Francisco 1966* (Varese Sarabande, 2002). Recorded on July 28, 1966, shortly after Janis Joplin joined the band, this finds the band somewhat tentative in their transition from a garage band to a bluesy psychedelic one. More R&B-oriented than their subsequent work, it does include early versions of several of their more well-known songs ("Down on Me," "Coo Coo," "Ball and Chain"), though these aren't nearly as good as ones they'd do in 1967 and 1968. Primarily of historical interest, it's been reissued numerous times since the 1980s; this is one of the more widely available and better packaged editions, adding a live version of "Hall of the Mountain King" from an April 1967 TV show as a bonus cut.

Big Brother & the Holding Company, *Big Brother & the Holding Company* (Columbia/Legacy, 1967). Though rushed and not done under optimum conditions, Big Brother's first album (recorded in late 1966, though not issued until September 1967) had the mix of blues, folk-rock, and crazed distorted guitar typical of much early San Francisco psychedelia. Janis Joplin's soulful, fiery vocals were the necessary element to elevate them to the front of the pack, as heard on "Down on Me" and the non-LP single "Coo Coo" (added to the CD as a bonus track), as crazed a psychedelic rock update of an overdone folk music standard as you'll hear.

Blackburn & Snow, *Something Good for Your Head* (Big Beat, 1999). Some of the most unjustly overlooked early folk-rock was recorded by this male-female Bay Area duo, who specialized in close bittersweet harmonies. They only released four tracks while active (including David Crosby's "Stranger in a Strange Land"), which is here along with sixteen previously unreleased outtakes.

The Charlatans, *The Amazing Charlatans* (Big Beat, 1996). Of all the bands considered major 1960s San Francisco rock acts, the Charlatans were the most poorly served by official record releases. Only one poorly distributed 1966 single came out prior to their sole LP in 1969, by which time the personnel from their early and better lineups had been altered for the worse. This compilation remedies that to a degree, featuring 23 recordings from 1965-68, none of them (except the two tracks from that 1966 single) released in the 1960s. Those expecting trailblazing psychedelic rock will be disappointed, as the band leaned far more toward a good-timey mixture of blues, country, and jugband music, somewhat along the lines of a spaced-out Lovin' Spoonful. Ultimately their importance is more social than musical, but there are a few psychedelic-folk-rock cuts here that live up to the legend, especially Dan Hicks's "We're Not on the Same Trip."

Country Joe & the Fish, *Collectors Items: The First Three EPs* (Sequel, 1994). Before putting out their debut LP in 1967, Country Joe & the Fish did two EPs on their own Rag Baby label. For the first, recorded in October 1965, they were still an acoustic folk jugband, though it included early versions of "Superbird" and their most famous song, "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag." For the second,

recorded in June 1966, they were already into all-out psychedelia, especially on the raga-rock instrumental "Section 43." All five of the tracks from those two EPs are on this album, though the other tracks (two folk songs performed by Peter Krug that filled out the first EP, and a 1971 EP on which Joe McDonald was the only remaining member from the mid-'60s lineups) are inessential.

John Fahey, *Vol. 4: The Great San Bernardino Birthday Party* (Takoma, 1966). Though Fahey had moved from Berkeley to Los Angeles by the time this was released, this rather haphazard grouping of 1962-66 recordings stands as the folk guitarist most out-there work. His blend of folk, blues, and unpredictable avant-garde/Indian/classical/world music elements was a largely overlooked but notable influence on early psychedelic Bay Area rock musicians, particularly Country Joe & the Fish, whose manager Ed Denson co-founded the Takoma record label with Fahey.

Bobby Freeman, *C'Mon and Swim with Bobby Freeman* (Big Beat, 2000). Arguably San Francisco's first rock'n'roll star, hitting #5 in 1958 with "Do You Want to Dance?," Freeman returned to the Top Five in 1964 with "C'Mon and Swim." This compilation of his mid-'60s work ("Do You Want to Dance?" is not included) captures the time at which he moved into early mainstream dance-oriented soul, though it had little relation to the San Francisco rock scene that followed in the mid-to-late 1960s.

Lowell Fulson, *My First Recordings* (Arhoolie, 1997). A 26-track anthology of recordings made while Fulson was living in the Bay Area, marking him as the first electric blues/R&B musician of note from the region. This has his R&B hit "Three O'Clock Blues," a yet bigger hit when done by B.B. King in 1951. After this period Lowell Fulson moved to Los Angeles, as did perhaps the other Bay Area-based bluesman of most consequence from the late 1940s, Pee Wee Crayton.

The Golliwogs, *Pre-Creedence* (Fantasy, 1975). All 14 of the songs the Golliwogs released on mid-1960s singles for Fantasy prior to changing their name to Creedence Clearwater Revival. Despite their historical importance, they're primarily of historical interest only. The British Invasion-influenced material is largely mediocre

and not to similar to CCR, especially as much of it's sung not by CCR leader John Fogerty, but his brother Tom. This LP is now rare and long out of print, but much released and unreleased Golliwogs material, as well as early-'60s singles they did as Tommy Fogerty & the Blue Velvets, appear on the six-CD box set *Creedence Clearwater Revival*.

The Grateful Dead, *Birth of the Dead* (Rhino, 2003). The first disc of this two-CD set has Grateful Dead studio recordings from November 1965 and July 1966, just two of which were released at the time. These show the Dead casting about for an identity, influences criss-crossing from jug band folk and electric blues to early British Invasion music. The second disc has live recordings from July 1966 that are generally more blues-oriented, though folk is still prominent on versions of "He Was a Friend of Mine" and Bob Dylan's "It's All Over Now, Baby Blue." Generally this documents the roots of the Dead before they'd found a distinctive style, though prominent elements of their late-'60s sound are easy to detect.

The Great Society, *Collector's Item* (Columbia, 1990). Recorded live in 1966 at the Matrix club in San Francisco, this is probably the most unjustly overlooked document of the entire Bay Area rock scene. Though known mostly for featuring Grace Slick as primary lead vocalist before she joined Jefferson Airplane, the Great Society were crucial to the evolution of folk-rock to acid rock, incorporating plenty of improvisation, jazz, and Indian influences. Originally released in the late 1960s as two separate LPs, this 67-minute CD has performances of "Somebody to Love" and "White Rabbit" before Slick brought those songs to the Airplane, though some of the other original, hauntingly melodic material (particularly Slick's compositions) are close to the same league. The Great Society's rare 1966 single version of "Somebody to Love" (then titled "Someone to Love") can be heard on *Born to Be Burned*, a compilation of more rudimentary studio recordings from late 1965 that were mostly unreleased at the time.

Vince Guaraldi, *Greatest Hits* (Fantasy, 1989). Guaraldi's playful and pop-influenced brand of jazz piano wasn't a significant influence on San Francisco rock, but did demonstrate that music recorded in the Bay Area could have national success. He achieved

that with his 1963 hit "Cast Your Fate to the Wind" and his famously bouncy, whimsical soundtrack music to the early *Peanuts* TV specials, both of which can be heard on this compilation.

Jefferson Airplane, *Takes Off* (RCA, 1966). The first major album by a San Francisco group is far more folk-rock-oriented than their later efforts, and to some will suffer from the absence of Grace Slick, this album having been recorded with original woman vocalist Signe Anderson. It still has fine melodic songs that helped set the bittersweet tone often used in San Francisco '60s rock, as well as the male-female vocal harmonies that would be prominent in both the Airplane and numerous other Bay Area bands. "It's No Secret," "Come Up the Years," "Blues from an Airplane," and "Don't Slip Away" would remain among their more popular tunes even after they'd moved to a harder-rocking sound.

Jefferson Airplane, *Early Flight* (RCA, 1974). Most of the outtakes/rarities on this compilation date from 1965 and 1966. While they're not up to the level of the material on their first two albums, most of them are quite decent mid-'60s folk-rock, especially "High Flyin' Bird" (which they're seen doing in June 1967 in the *Monterey Pop* film) and "Go to Her," a *Surrealistic Pillow* outtake with the Grace Slick lineup.

Jefferson Airplane, *Live at the Fillmore Auditorium 10/15/66: Late Show: Signe's Farewell* (Collectors' Choice Music Live, 2010). Signe Anderson's final show with the Airplane, in good sound, featuring much of the material from the *Take Off* album and interesting extras like "High Flyin' Bird" and their cover of Donovan's "Fat Angel" (which mentions the Airplane in the lyrics).

Jefferson Airplane, *Live at the Fillmore Auditorium 10/16/66: Early & Late Shows: Grace's Debut* (Collectors' Choice Music Live, 2010). The very next night after the album listed above, this recording was made of Grace Slick's first shows with the band. There's some overlap in the songs performed, but also some interesting different ones like their extended version of Fred Neil's "The Other Side of This Life" and, from their still-to-come *Surrealistic Pillow* album, "3/5 of a Mile in 10 Seconds."

Jefferson Airplane, *Live at the Fillmore Auditorium 11/25/66 & 11/27/66: Early & Late Shows: We Have Ignition* (Collectors' Choice Music Live, 2010). Though only six weeks after Grace Slick joined, this two-CD set shows them moving into the *Surrealistic Pillow* era with performances of "White Rabbit," "She Has Funny Cars," "Plastic Fantastic Lover," and "Today," as well as songs from their first album.

The Kingston Trio, *The Essential Kingston Trio* (Shout Factory, 2006). Two-CD compilation of the most popular material by this phenomenally successful, if extremely clean-cut, folk boom act in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Includes big hits like "Tom Dooley," "Tijuana Jail," and "Reverend Mr. Black," as well as several dozen others. If you want even more, there's the four-CD *The Kingston Trio: The Capitol Years*.

Jimmy McCracklin, *Jimmy McCracklin at His Best: The Walk* (Razor & Tie, 1997). Twenty-song best-of spanning the mid-1950s to the late 1960s from this Bay Area bluesman who crossed over to rock'n'roll and the Pop Top Ten with his 1958 hit "The Walk."

The Mojo Men, *Not Too Old to Start Cryin'* (Big Beat, 2008). For a group with very limited national chart success, the Mojo Men recorded a great deal of material, with no less than four CDs of material from the mid-to-late 1960s (much of it unreleased at the time) now available. This collection of previously unissued 1966 material is about the best, with similarities to other early San Francisco folk-rock acts like Jefferson Airplane in the male-female vocal combinations. Their rougher, woman-less, basic garage rock recordings for Autumn are on the Sundazed compilation *Whys Ain't Supposed to Be*, while somewhat poppier 1966-67 recordings for Reprise are on the Sundazed CD *Sit Down...It's the Mojo Men*.

The Mystery Trend, *So Glad I Found You* (Big Beat, 1999). The Mystery Trend were another group that got to release hardly any records, despite their local reputation. This compilation has 21 tracks by the enigmatic band, who combined harmony pop-rock, off-kilter lyrics, and some jazz and psychedelic rock in ways not easily comparable to other acts.

Quicksilver Messenger Service, *Live at the Fillmore February 4, 1967* (Cleopatra, 2011). There are a bewilderingly abundant assortment of archival live Quicksilver albums from 1966-1968, including a few from the extended period during which they operated without a recording contract before their 1968 debut LP. It's hard to choose between them, but this has the advantage of containing two CDs of material, including some on which founder-member Dino Valenti (who was not on their early albums) sits in. At this point, however, they had yet to hit their full stride, concentrating more on straightforward blues-rock (much as the Dead did in their early days) than they would on their more impressive debut album, when they integrated more folk and jazz influences.

The 13th Floor Elevators, *Absolutely the Best* (Varese, 2002). Although they were from Austin, Texas, the 13th Floor Elevators were based in San Francisco for a while in 1966, and made some impact on the early Bay Area psychedelic scene. Their slim catalog has been reissued in so many dozens of confusing forms that it's hard to know where to start. This is a decent 20-song best-of if you can find it, including their sole modest national hit, "You're Gonna Miss Me." That was more garage rock than psychedelia, but other songs here were among the first to make direct lyrical and sonic references to the psychedelic experience, including the standout folk-rock ballad "Splash I." A fair-quality recording of a 1966 show they did at the Avalon has been reissued on numerous occasions, too.

The Vejtables, *Feel...The Vejtables* (Sundazed, 1995). Decent if not spectacular early San Francisco folk-rock from a band featuring a woman drummer/singer (Jan Errico) who would leave to join the Mojo Men, after which they did the early psychedelic single "Feel the Music" (also included here).

We Five, *There Stands the Door: The Best of We Five* (Big Beat, 2009). True, they weren't great, and they never did another song as good as their one big hit, "You Were on My Mind." But they were one of the first folk-rock groups to have a national hit, and their male-female vocal blend was typical of numerous early San Francisco folk-rock acts from Jefferson Airplane on down. This best-

of wisely concentrates on their best folk-rock recordings with original woman singer Beverly Bevens, eliminating the dreary pop and showtunes that filled out much of their early albums.

Various Artists, *Bay Area Rockers: San Francisco Rockabilly and Rock'n'Roll 1957-1960* (Ace, 1999). Truth be told, aside from Bobby Freeman (represented here by Betty Lou Got a New Pair of Shoes," though his bigger hit "Do You Want to Dance?" is absent) and Jimmy McCracklin, the early San Francisco rock scene wasn't anything special. This compilation proves the city, like almost every metropolitan area in North America, did have an active scene, even if it didn't result in a distinctive regional style or much commercial success.

Various Artists, *Nuggets Vol. 7: Early San Francisco* (Rhino, 1985). It never made it onto CD, but this is a reasonable overview of very early San Francisco folk-rock, with tracks by the Beau Brummels, the We Five, and the Charlatans, as well as very early psychedelia by the Great Society (Grace Slick's pre-Jefferson Airplane band) and Country Joe & the Fish. Some other material from this scene is on the four-CD box set *San Francisco Nuggets*, which covers Bay Area '60s rock into the heart of the psychedelic era and the end of the decade.

Various Artists, *San Francisco Roots* (Collectors' Choice, 2009). Ragtag compilation of mid-'60s San Francisco rock on the Autumn label, originally released in 1968. Has hits and rarities by the Beau Brummels, the Great Society (the original version of "Somebody to Love"), the Mojo Men, and the Vejtables.

Various Artists, *Sing Me a Rainbow: A Trident Anthology 1965-1967* (Big Beat, 2008). Kingston Trio manager Frank Werber's Trident Productions was responsible for much of the early folk-rock to emerge from San Francisco, sometimes drawing on pop and early psychedelia, although it only resulted in one big hit, We Five's "You Were on My Mind." This two-CD set has tracks from a wide assortment of Trident acts, ranging from the excellent (including selections by Blackburn & Snow, We Five, the Sons of Champlin, and the Mystery Trend) to the mundane, though as an archival release it's of considerable historic value.

Recommended Books:

Been So Long: My Life & Music, by Jorma Kaukonen (St. Martin's Press, 2018). The memoir by the guy most famous as the lead guitarist of Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna is only mildly recommended. There's too much about his cars and motorcycles, and too many distracting twenty-first century diary entries/reflections. Perhaps predictably, the sections on the Airplane are the most interesting, though even these don't get terribly in-depth or descriptive of his relationships with the other members (save the one he was and remains closest to, Jack Casady). There are some good stories and perspectives here and there, however, as well as some detailed (if sometimes technical) insights into his guitar technique.

Don't You Want Somebody to Love, by Darby Slick (SLG Books, 1991). Darby Slick was the Great Society's guitarist, Grace Slick's brother-in-law, and the composer of "Somebody to Love," which Jefferson Airplane made into a huge hit. Though a little on the disappointingly slim and perfunctory side, this autobiography is useful as it focuses mostly on his time in the Great Society, with observations about the burgeoning mid-'60s San Francisco psychedelic scene as a whole.

Eye Mind: The Saga of Roky Erickson and the 13th Floor Elevators, the Pioneers of Psychedelic Sound, by Paul Drummond (Process Media, 2007). A more comprehensive biography (running a little more than 400 pages) than could have ever been hoped for of this cult psychedelic band, including coverage of their brief stay in the Bay Area in the summer and fall of 1966.

Got a Revolution! The Turbulent Flight of Jefferson Airplane, by Jeff Tamarkin (Atria Books, 2005). Comprehensive story of the leading San Francisco psychedelic band, including first-hand interviews with all of the band members.

Grace Slick: The Biography, by Barbara Rowes (Doubleday, 1980). Though it's not too easy to find these days, this is a

reasonably well done biography that has quite a few details about Jefferson Airplane's career, along with some coverage of her pre-Airplane band, the Great Society. It's certainly better than Slick's own disappointing autobiography, 1998's *Somebody to Love?*

The Haight-Ashbury: A History, by Charles Perry (Wenner Books, 2005). First published in the mid-1980s, this is the best account of the neighborhood more identified with the psychedelic movement and the Summer of Love than any other.

The Haight: Love, Rock, and Revolution: The Photography of Jim Marshall, by Joel Selvin (Insight Editions, 2014). 300-page coffee table book principally devoted to photos of the Haight-Ashbury and its affiliated rock/counterculture scenes in the 1960s, primarily in 1966 and 1967. While it has basic text about the Haight-Ashbury and San Francisco rock during the time by Selvin, it's primarily a photo book spotlighting the work of top rock lensman Jim Marshall, with plenty of pictures of icons like Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, and Janis Joplin.

Harlem of the West: The San Francisco Fillmore Jazz Era, by Elizabeth Pepin Silva and Lewis Watts (Heyday, 2020). For about twenty years after World War II, San Francisco's Fillmore district was the center of the city's African-American cultural life. This book deftly combines more than 200 photos with oral history quotes from people who were there, and some explanatory background text by the authors.

I Scare Myself, by Dan Hicks (Jawbone, 2017). Hicks's rather short memoir (about 165 pages not counting some supplements by other writers) is much like the man and his music: nonchalantly dry and mutedly witty. For those familiar with his idiosyncratic cult output, it's fairly interesting and entertaining, going all the way back to his pre-Charlatans folkie days. His most celebrated era, the half-dozen or so years as leader of the idiosyncratically country-swing Hot Licks starting in the late '60s, gets a good amount of ink.

Janis: Her Life and Music, by Holly George-Warren (Simon & Schuster, 2019). While both this and are worth reading and Alice Echols's *Scars of Sweet Paradise* are worth reading, this has the edge

since, as the title indicates, this pays some more attention to Joplin's music. It's covered in depth here, with lots of description of both released and unreleased recordings, as well as first-hand interviews with associates and research into archives and personal letters.

Living with the Myth of Janis Joplin: The History of Big Brother and the Holding Co. 1965-2005, by Michael Spörke (Books on Demand, 2003). While this is a slim 106-page one-sitting reading with nothing in the way of design, it's actually a pretty good overview of Big Brother's career, the only serious flaw being there could have been more content. It does use interview material with everyone in the band except Joplin, along with several of their associates. Though this is self-published and not widely distributed, there are half a dozen copies in the San Francisco library system,

A Long Strange Trip: The Inside History of the Grateful Dead, by Dennis McNally (Three Rivers Press, 2003). At 700 pages, the most thorough account of the Grateful Dead likely to be written, authored by a longtime official historian/publicist for the band.

Pearl: The Obsessions and Passions of Janis Joplin, by Ellis Amburn (Warner Books, 1992). Not as good or as well-written as *Janis: Her Life and Music* and *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin*. But as many interviews were done for this book too, it does have some stories and memories worth reading for Joplin fans.

San Francisco Nights: The Psychedelic Music Trip 1965-1968, by Gene Sculatti and Davin Seay (St. Martin's Press, 1985). As an overall account of the San Francisco Sound's 1960s heyday, it's been superseded by Joel Selvin's *Summer of Love*. But this is still a fun, breezy overview, amply illustrated with black and white photos.

Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin, by Alice Echols (Henry Holt, 2000). One of the two only seriously worthwhile biographies of Joplin, covering her years with Big Brother & the Holding Company and as a solo artist. It documents her musical and personal lives, as well as her significance to the counterculture and feminism.

So Many Roads: The Life and Times of the Grateful Dead, by David Browne (Da Capo, 2015). While not as long as Dennis McNally's Grateful Dead bio *A Long Strange Trip* (see above), some readers might find this career-spanning book more accessible. It takes the approach of focusing on a key date in Grateful Dead history in every chapter, but actually that's just a loose structure on which to hang a fairly standard biography.

Recommended DVDs:

Big Brother & the Holding Company with Janis Joplin: Nine Hundred Nights (Pioneer Artists, 2001). Though it didn't receive much attention, this is a good hour-long documentary of Big Brother & the Holding Company, focusing on the two-and-a-half years or so during which Janis Joplin was their singer. Includes interviews with and vintage footage of the band.

Dawn of the Dead: The Grateful Dead & the Rise of the San Francisco Underground (Sexy Intellectual, 2012). Two-hour documentary focuses on the Grateful Dead's early career, particularly their 1960s albums. Heavy on talking head music critics, but also includes some vintage footage of and interviews with members of the Dead and their associates.

Fly Jefferson Airplane (Eagle Vision, 2004). More than a dozen performance clips spanning the Airplane's career, as well as linking interview footage with members of the band.

Janis: Little Girl Blue (Filmrise, 2016). Straightforward hour-and-45-minute documentary on Janis Joplin. It has interviews with quite a few of her associates (including members of Big Brother and her post-Big Brother bands, as well as her sister and brother), and mixes in lots of 1967-70 performance and interview clips. This is the film that played on PBS in 2016 as part of its *American Masters* series, though the DVD is a little longer.

The Kingston Trio Story: Wherever We May Go (Shout Factory, 2006). Hour-long documentary of the popular folk group

with plenty of bonus features, even including some commercials they did for 7 Up.

San Francisco Sounds: A Place in Time (2023). Streaming on the MGM+ channel, this two-part, two-and-a-half-hour documentary focuses on the San Francisco psychedelic rock scene of the last half of the 1960s, though episode two goes a fair way into the 1970s. This is a decent overview that focuses on the most celebrated acts of the time: Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother & the Holding Company, the Grateful Dead, Santana, and Sly & the Family Stone, with some attention paid to Country Joe & the Fish, Moby Grape, Quicksilver Messenger Service, the Charlatans, Steve Miller, and the Tower of Power. There are quite a few (if very brief) archive film clips and photos, although there are many interesting secondary musical acts in the scene who aren't seen or even mentioned, and there's arguably a little too much attention paid to non-musical aspects of the scene, like posters and light shows.

The Trips Festival Movie (The Trips Festival, 2007). Documentary of the January 1966 event that did much to blaze the trail for combining music, multimedia, and drug/lifestyle experimentation, including footage from the festival and interviews with festival organizers Stewart Brand, Ken Kesey, and Bill Graham.

Watch the Other One: The Long Strange Trip of Bob Weir (Netflix, 2015). Weir was not the most famous or colorful member of the Dead (Jerry Garcia was), but as second guitarist and second banana of sorts, he made major contributions to the band. Spanning his whole career, this documentary jumps back and forth from the past to the present. The best parts are those in which he tells interesting stories of the band's rise and fall, with the help of good archive clips.

You're Gonna Miss Me: A Film About Roky Erickson (Palm Pictures, 2005). Documentary on the troubled lead singer of the 13th Floor Elevators, who's struggled with mental problems since the late 1960s. There isn't much vintage footage of the Elevators to draw from, but there's some here, as well as much drama surrounding the conflicting struggles of his relatives over how best to manage the singer's condition in the subsequent decades.

Notable Figures (Excluding Star Musicians):

Ed Denson: Manager of Country Joe & the Fish. Also co-founder of folk label Takoma Records with guitarist John Fahey (who was also the label's most popular artist), and also crucial to helping rediscover and re-popularize country blues musicians who had recorded before World War II and then slipped into obscurity.

Tom Donahue: DJ at KYA, San Francisco's most popular AM rock station. Co-founded Autumn Records, the city's most prominent mid-'60s rock label, with Bobby Mitchell, with whom he also produced concerts, including the Beatles' last concert (at Candlestick Park on August 29, 1966).

Ralph Gleason: *San Francisco Chronicle* music columnist. Although he had previously specialized in jazz and folk, and was almost fifty when the psychedelic era arrived, he was the first prominent media figure to champion the San Francisco sound. Co-founded *Rolling Stone* with Jann Wenner in 1967.

Bill Graham: Manager of the San Francisco Mime Troupe in the mid-1960s, moving into promoting rock concerts, particularly at the Fillmore. Also manager of Jefferson Airplane for a while, and eventually not only the most successful rock promoter in Bay Area history, but one of the most successful and famous rock promoters in the world.

Chet Helms: Chief rival San Francisco rock promoter to Bill Graham, at least in the last half of the 1960s, particularly at the Avalon Ballroom. Also first manager of Big Brother & the Holding Company.

Erik Jacobsen: Record producer for the Lovin' Spoonful, singer-songwriter Tim Hardin, and, long after the 1960s, Chris Isaak. Briefly got involved with the San Francisco Sound as producer for the Charlatans in the mid-1960s, though few recordings from their association were issued.

Matthew Katz: Early Jefferson Airplane manager, later manager of Moby Grape and It's a Beautiful Day.

Bobby Mitchell: Like his more famous business partner Tom Donahue, a DJ at KYA. With Donohue, ran Autumn Records and promoted local concerts. Died in 1968.

Bob Shad: Record producer and owner of Mainstream Records, the first national label to pay serious attention to the San Francisco rock scene. Most of the Bay Area acts it signed during a brief flurry of activity in the early psychedelic era did not pan out, with the exception of Big Brother & the Holding Company, whose first album it released.

Sylvester Stewart: In the mid-'60s, producer of numerous acts at Autumn Records, including the Beau Brummels, and DJ at San Francisco soul station KSOL. Better known as Sly Stone after he subsequently founded Sly & the Family Stone.

Chris Strachwitz: Founder of Arhoolie Records, the Bay Area company that became one of the leading folk/ethnic music labels in the world. Rarely recorded rock, but did record the original folk version of Country Joe & the Fish's "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag" in 1965, revenue from his share of the publishing helping to subsidize Arhoolie.

Frank Werber: Manager of the Kingston Trio. In 1964 he formed Trident Productions in 1964, which recorded much interesting early San Francisco rock, including material by We Five, Blackburn & Snow, the Sons of Champlin, John Stewart, and the Mystery Trend.

Notable Places:

Acid Tests: Events/parties, mostly in late 1965 and early 1966, held by author Ken Kesey for experimentation with LSD, with the Grateful Dead performing the accompanying music. Most took place in San Francisco, though some were in Los Angeles; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acid_Tests for list.

The Avalon Ballroom: Other than the Fillmore, the most popular venue for early San Francisco psychedelic rock, running from 1966-68.

Candlestick Park: Site of the Beatles' final official concert, August 29, 1966.

Columbus Tower: North Beach building housing Trident Productions, with a basement recording facility where some Trident acts recorded.

The Cow Palace: Prior to the emergence of the Fillmore and the Avalon, the leading facility in San Francisco for rock'n'roll concerts, including the Beatles' shows here in 1964 and 1965.

The Fillmore Auditorium: The leading rock venue, both for local psychedelic acts and international touring stars, in San Francisco from early 1966 to mid-1968, operated by Bill Graham.

Golden State Recorders: In San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood, a studio in which much mid-to-late-'60s rock was recorded, including material by Big Brother & the Holding Company, the Beau Brummels, the Charlatans, the Great Society, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and the Grateful Dead.

The hungry i [sic]: North Beach folk club at which the Kingston Trio built their following; also hosted the Lovin' Spoonful during their San Francisco visit in 1966.

The Jabberwock: Berkeley folk club, near the UC Berkeley campus on Telegraph Avenue, where Country Joe & the Fish made the transition from folk jug band to electric psychedelic rock band over the course of numerous performances in 1965 and 1966. An amazing site dedicated to its history (www.chickenonaunicycle.com/Jabberwock%20History.htm) has a list of shows and displays of gig posters and photos.

KPFA: Berkeley public radio station, still going as a Pacifica affiliate today, that broadcast much non-commercial music of all kinds. They didn't specialize in rock, but Janis Joplin broadcast some

folk/blues performances on the station in the early 1960s prior to her move to rock, and Phil Lesh was a board operator there before playing bass in the Grateful Dead.

KSOL: San Francisco soul station, most famous for Sly Stone doing a stint there as DJ in the mid-'60s.

KYA: San Francisco AM rock station, whose DJs Tom Donohue and Bobby Mitchell co-founded Autumn Records and promoted local rock concerts.

Longshoremen's Hall: Site of what's often considered the first San Francisco psychedelic rock concert on October 16, 1965, with the Great Society and the Charlatans. Also famous as site of the Trips Festival in January 1966, with the Grateful Dead and Big Brother & the Holding Company.

The Matrix: Marina club that Jefferson Airplane singer Marty Balin was instrumental in helping start in summer 1965, primarily as a place where the band could play. Continued to stage shows by the Airplane and other leading San Francisco bands throughout the rest of the 1960s, as well as by major touring acts like the Doors and the Velvet Underground. Important live archival releases by the Great Society, the Airplane, the Doors, and the Velvet Underground were recorded there.

Mother's: North Beach club co-run by Tom Donahue and Bobby Mitchell, whose acts included the Great Society, the Grateful Dead, and visiting New York folk-rock stars the Lovin' Spoonful.

The Offstage: San Jose folk club where several major musicians performed before moving to San Francisco and switching to rock, including Paul Kantner and Jorma Kaukonen of Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin, Jerry Garcia, and David Freiberg of Quicksilver Messenger Service.

Peppermint Tree: North Beach club at which Los Angeles stars the Byrds, the first true folk-rock group, did their first out-of-town gigs in spring 1965, even before they had a hit.

The Psychedelic Shop: One of the first, if not the first, head shops in San Francisco or anywhere. Opened in January 1966, it sold records, books, incense, posters, and concert tickets in the heart of Haight-Ashbury, at 1535 Haight Street.

RCA Studios: Before 1969, Jefferson Airplane recorded at the Hollywood branch of RCA's recording studios.

Red Dog Saloon: Virginia City, Nevada venue where the Charlatans devised their brand of psychedelically influenced good-time blues/jug band rock in the summer of 1965.

1090 Page Street: Large Haight-Ashbury house where Big Brother & the Holding Company formed and played some of their early concerts.

Notable Labels:

Arhoolie: Bay Area label known mostly for recording folk, blues, and ethnic music, but known to the rock world for its owner (Chris Strachwitz) being the first to record Country Joe & the Fish.

Autumn: The first San Francisco independent rock label of any consequence, noted mostly for hits by the Beau Brummels, though they also recorded rare released and unreleased material by the Great Society, the Charlatans, and the Grateful Dead, among numerous other acts.

Fantasy: Known mostly for contemporary jazz by the likes of Dave Brubeck, Vince Guaraldi, and Cal Tjader, this San Francisco (later Berkeley) label also sporadically recorded rock and soul, including (on its Scorpio subsidiary) the Grateful Dead's first single in 1966. It also put out records by the Golliwogs before they changed their name to Creedence Clearwater Revival.

International Artists: Though based in Houston, with Kenny Rogers's brother Leland working as staff producer, this was the label that put out records by the 13th Floor Elevators, the Austin, Texas psychedelic band who were based in San Francisco for a while in 1966.

Mainstream: Though most of the Bay Area artists they signed in the early days of the San Francisco Sound are forgotten, it did put out Big Brother & the Holding Company's first album, recorded when the band were starved for quick cash while on tour. The group's contract was then sold to Columbia Records after much negotiation.

Rag Baby: An outgrowth of Country Joe McDonald's *Rag Baby* magazine, this label issued two EPs by Country Joe & the Fish (in 1965 and 1966) before they signed with Vanguard Records.

RCA: Not based in San Francisco and not especially hip, but the first major label to make a major investment in the San Francisco Sound by signing Jefferson Airplane in late 1965.

Takoma: Though founded in Washington, DC and moved to Los Angeles in the last part of the 1960s, for a while in the mid-1960s this folk label was based in Berkeley. Its founder, guitarist John Fahey, was also its most successful artist, and his combination of folk, blues, and unpredictable strands of experimental and world music on his instrumental albums was influential on early San Francisco psychedelic bands like Country Joe & the Fish. Other eccentric guitarists of note on the label included Robbie Basho.

Notable Publications:

Cream Puff War: Historical fanzine "dedicated to the San Francisco Bay Area sound." Just two issues were published, #1 in 1991 and #2 in 1993, and are now hard to find. However, they contain invaluable in-depth stories on and interviews with early San Francisco groups, including the Great Society, the Charlatans, the Mojo Men, the Vejtables, and the Final Solution.

Mojo Navigator: Even predating *Rolling Stone*, this was the first San Francisco rock publication – though it was really more a mimeographed fanzine – concentrating on hip and underground rock, much of it from San Francisco. Original copies are scarce and very hard to find, but the issues are online at <http://www.rockmine.com/Archive/Library/Mojo.html>. One of the

principals, then-teenaged Greg Shaw, went on to found *Bomp!*, one of the first rock history magazines (and also an independent punk/new wave/power pop record label), after moving to Los Angeles in the 1970s.