

Two generations of genius & tragedy

JUNE

2000 £3.10
A5G129
13500

The Music Magazine

Plus Super
Furries, XTC,
Beach Boys,
Manics

"Get on
board –
if you dare!"

Janis

Wild tales from
the oblivion express



— strange, bizarre? Seven or eight years from now the people going to Las Vegas will be fans of ours — they're gonna have grown up and they're gonna be going to Las Vegas. In 10 years, honey, it's gonna be our crowd, man. We can go back there and rock'n'roll. The '60s are selling now in Las Vegas. Ten years from now the '70s are gonna be selling. And if the Jefferson Airplane still manage to keep their dregs together, they're gonna be playing there too."

Bonnie: "I certainly hope you're right, man, because I had a super bummer in Las Vegas."

Janis: "I went there once. They asked me, 'How did you learn to sing the blues like that? How did you learn to sing that heavy?' I didn't learn shit, man. I just opened my mouth and that's what I sounded like. You can't make up something that you don't feel. I didn't make it up. I just opened my mouth and it existed."

Bonnie: "You know that a lot of people say the trouble with women is they don't think about what they say before they say it."

Janis: "That's the good thing about women, man. Because they sing their fuckin' insides, man. Women, to be in the music business, give up more than you'd ever know. She's got kids she gave up... Any woman gives up home life, an old man probably. You give up a home and friends, children and friends. You give up an old man and friends, you give up every constant in the world except music. That's the only thing in the world you got, man. So for a woman to sing, she really needs to or wants to. A man can do it as a gig, because he knows he can get laid tonight."

Bonnie: "A lot of musicians are married and worship the footsteps their wives walk in. But they go on the road and they ball, and they have a ball. But when they are home, no one is going to break their marriage up, there ain't nobody gonna hurt their children. But what man would have you and let you do what you must do?"

Janis: "That's the trouble! You either got to be as big a star as the chick or you got to be a flunky. And no woman, at least me, I don't want an ass-kisser. I want a cat that's bigger and stronger and ballsier than me. When I'm pulling my shit as a singer it's hard to find him, because the only cats that hang around dressing rooms are flunkies. They're all right for a night, but when you want to talk about a man, ain't no man in the world needs to hang around a dressing room. The men are out in some log cabin, growing grass and chopping trees, and I never get to see them. But that gives you more soul, right?"

Bonnie: "That's what they say, honey, that's what they say. When Delaney and I met, it was that fast. I married him seven days after I met him. I was never married before, I was 23. He was never married and 26 and no one even thought about getting married. For 10 years before I met Delaney, I lived in hell. I worked in strip joints and truck stops, and I went on between the second-best and the best stripper. You got to have a break so the star could come out. I'd be out there singing a song and they'd be yelling, 'Take it off, baby!'"

Janis: "I wasn't even a chick singer until I became a chick singer. I was a dope dealer and a hang-out artist. And a chick on the street trying to find a place to sleep and a cat to lay. I didn't ever sing until they turned me into a rock'n'roll singer. I sang for free beer once in a while, but I never even wanted to grow up to be a singer. A very bizarre experience."

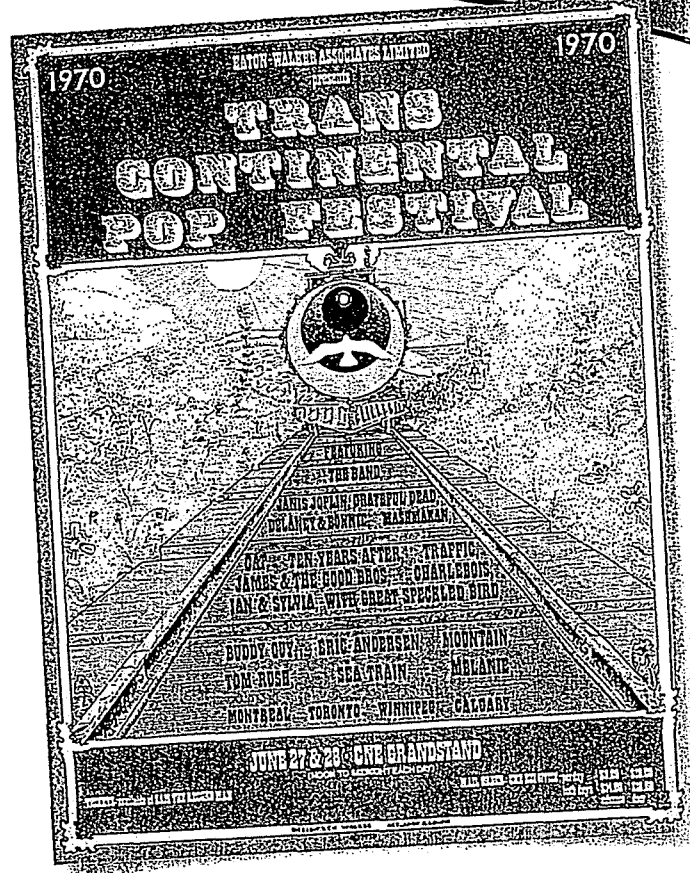
Bonnie: "It's really weird. I never wanted to be anything else. That was my whole life."

Janis: "All my life I just wanted to be a beatnik. Meet all the heavies, get stoned, get laid, have a good time. That's all I ever wanted. I knew I had a good voice and I could get a couple of beers off of it. Then someone threw me in this rock'n'roll band. They threw these musicians at me, man, and the sound was coming from behind. The bass was charging me. And I decided then and there that that was it. I never wanted to do anything else. It was better than it had been with any man, you know. Maybe that's the trouble."



The Festival Express was the final flight of '60s fantasy, the last moment when this sort of what-the-hell-it-sounds-like-a-gas adventure was still possible on an intimate scale. In a certain sense it was a reprise of the happy, high old days of the Haight-Ashbury (and with many of the original cast). The longed-for '60s utopia was a fairy tale we told to ourselves and which we all fervently believed would come true if we wished for it hard enough — and no one wished for it with more heart than Janis.

LOVE



It was a surreal vision: Janis and a cast of top stars partying across North America on a rock'n'roll express. By James Cullingham.

IF IT WERE A MOVIE PITCH, IT WOULD BE VON RYAN'S Express meets an acid rock Animal House: a train packed with rock stars speeding across Canada, Jerry Garcia up on the footplate, Janis Joplin knocking back vodkas in the bar, and carriages full of musicians jamming or partying on a variety of exotic substances. When the train stops, riots break out. This movie will one day reach the screens. But it won't be a work of fiction: it will be a documentary on the legendary Canadian Festival Express. Rick Danko, late-lamented bassist and singer of The Band, was a connoisseur of High Times. Just a few months before his death, he chortled at the memory of perhaps the very best of them: "It was one of the greatest jam sessions ever: a party going across Canada on this train. There was a couple of cars for music. A couple of cars for drinking. A couple of cars for food. A couple of cars for fuckin'. Ha-ha, you know. It was a pretty wild ride. It was one helluva party. It was sex, drugs and rock'n'roll at its best."

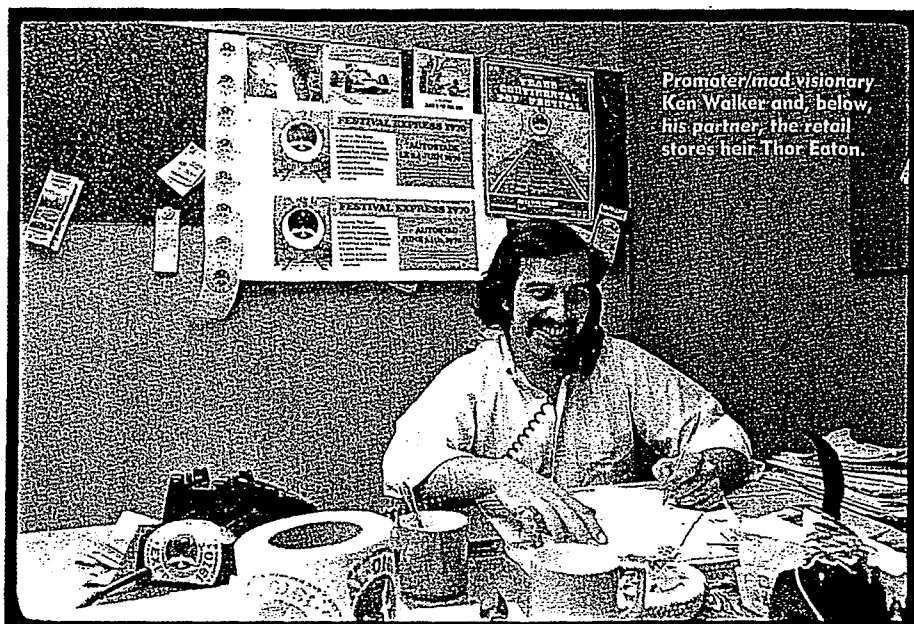
IN A TINY APARTMENT IN AN INDUSTRIAL SUBURB OF Toronto, the man responsible for this bizarre rock'n'roll vision fumbles around in the hope that one of a scattered heap of opened cigarette packs might contain a smoke. On the wall behind him a montage

Ivan Koutsky, courtesy of Ken Walker

ON THE TRACKS



Janis on her Canadian
jaunt: "She could light up
a fireplace with wet wood.
That's the kind of person
she was," says Buddy Guy.



Promoter/mad visionary Ken Walker and, below, his partner, the retail stores heir Thor Eaton.

of photographs documents the time he had legends like John Lennon and Eric Clapton play for union rate at Toronto's Rock And Roll Revival. San Francisco may have had Bill Graham. But Toronto had Ken Walker, son of a Russian rival to Fabergé. Walker staged the Revival Festival in 1969, winning instant credibility as one of the world's leading promoters. But the Revival was only the warm-up for a far more audacious plan: a party on rails guaranteed to attract rock'n'roll's best acts and the self-promoting spectre of a Canadian National train hurtling across Canada full of musicians.

The moustache is still there but, at 52, the plump, tracksuited Ken Walker bears little resemblance to the ambitious youth pictured in the photos on his wall. But then the intervening years have been singularly eventful: there was the US Customs bust for gun running at New York's La Guardia airport for which Walker remains wanted in the United States. There was the divorce and loss of custody of his three children. And there was a failed suicide in which Walker pointed a gun below his chin and fired, only to miss the critical part of his brain. Although he still suffers para-epileptic symptoms from the bullet which went through the roof of his mouth and out of the top of his head, Walker is a chain-smoking, articulate, sardonically charming medical marvel. As he moves stiffly about his apartment, he points out a piece of lumber about two feet long, six inches wide and two inches thick. He places it lovingly on a table: "James, you might wanna see this." On the piece of lumber are a set of model train tracks and two model CN passenger cars. One says 'Bar Car', the other 'Festival Express'. All along each side of the track are fading, but still legible, signatures: Janis Joplin, Bob Weir, Eric Andersen, Delaney Bramlett, Buddy Guy and more — a parting gift from the musicians to Ken Walker and Thor Eaton at the last show of the Festival Express in Calgary, Alberta in July 1970.

BY 1970 TORONTO WAS AWAKENING FROM A LONG Victorian nap: a city of less than two million still bound up in an old Empire corset. But things were stirring. Local hero/deviants Ronnie Hawkins And The Hawks had cut a swathe through contemporary rock'n'roll which turned Bob Dylan electric and gave birth to The Band. Glenn Gould was cocooned in a leafy north Toronto neighbourhood reinterpreting the piano music of Bach. A new Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau, helped stimulate the incredible notion that Canadians just might be sexy. Vietnam draft dodgers flocked to Toronto; the May 4, 1970 killing of student protesters at Kent State University in Ohio galvanised war resisters.

Ken Walker was 22 years old, a recent graduate from a Toronto tech-



nical college. Walker had rock'n'roll dreams of the mercantile kind. His well-heeled business partner Thor Eaton was a scion of Canada's biggest retail chain, Eaton's. After the huge coup of 1969, with Lennon, Plastic Ono Band et al, they suggested the idea of a train festival to Canadian National Railways. They were turned down. Undeterred, the duo went straight to head office via an Eaton family connection.

Walker was typically aggressive towards the heavily subsidised CNR: "I told the VP, If I have to sit in the gallery of the House Of Commons and shout down to the floor the next time you guys come for a hand-out then I will. We have the connections to get right into Capitol Hill. He got up and left the room. His secretary asked if we wanted lunch. She brought us steak sandwiches on china plates with silver lids. We ate. He came back trailing a print-out. 'Here's the tracks you'll be on, the number of cars and the time of each stop. You've got your train.' I think he was convinced that I was going to raise enough shit that he didn't want to deal with it."

Walker's chutzpah is no surprise to Eric Andersen. In 1969, Andersen befriended Ken Walker at the Toronto Pop Festival. In 1970, Andersen was one of the few solo acts on the Festival Express: "When Ken told me, you knew it was a once-in-a-lifetime thing: a unique, extraordinary experience. The idea of a train appeals to the imagination of any American or Canadian."

Andersen regards Walker as the only man with the vision to get a group of psychedelic troubadours on a trans-Canadian train: "Kenny is a very powerful figure. He has his dictatorial side and he

has his soulful side. He was an ace organiser. If Napoleon had him they would have had toilets on their retreat. He thought of everything. He even had the tickets printed on the paper Canadians use for their money, to thwart counterfeiting!"

As it turned out, counterfeiting was the least of Ken Walker's problems. To begin with, the mayor of Montreal cancelled a show which would have been held on St. Jean de Baptiste day, a calendar day for Quebec nationalists. It was decided to begin the tour in Toronto on June 27, 1970. In Toronto, Vietnam War protesters set their sights on Walker and his establishment friend, Eaton. The so-called May 4th Movement (M4M), inspired by Kent State, demanded free music and an end to "The RRRRip-Off Express". They were not met with diplomacy.

Ken Walker: "A group came to our office. This idiot was coming up the stairs. I told him to get out, he charged up the stairs so I kicked him in the head, all the way down the stairs and dragged him onto the street. Some of his gang were in the office yelling and shouting 'Music should be free', 'Free dope', 'No Pigs'. I said, If music is gonna be free who's gonna pay for this show? Then they wanted 10 per cent of the profits to go to daycare. I said, Profits from what? They were convinced we were going to turn a profit even if we didn't charge. I told them, You guys have been taking too much LSD and you're hallucinating. Get the hell out of my office and I hope you don't buy tickets, 'cos the show is too good for you idiots. That was the beginning of the feud with M4M."

By June 27, the feud had spilled over into the grounds and surrounding area of Toronto's decrepit Exhibition Stadium. Despite mounted police and extraordinary security, the M4M Movement disrupted the debut shows. The furor was quite a shock for a young guitar player arriving from Chicago. "I drove my van in," recounts Buddy Guy, "and they climbed on top of it and bent it down to the top of my head. It would hold the weight of one person, but there was more than that. Me and my whole band was in there. Back then the police didn't have no guns in Canada. I just drove on 'cos there was more tryin' to get on and they stayed on top until I got in. I was just as excited as they were. I thought they were just saying, 'Way to go, Buddy!'"

Press photos of mounted police amid swarming hippies overshad-

"The cops were chasing a guy across the roof. There was a lot of tension."

owed the musical event. For Rob Bowman, then a 14-year-old music fan, it was impossible to ignore the protest. "People were constantly storming the stadium to get in. At one point there was some guy racing across the roof of the old grandstand with the cops chasing him. There were announcements from the stage, a lot of tension."

Eventually, the idea was mooted of having The Grateful Dead play a free concert on the back of a truck in a nearby park. "I went to Jerry Garcia and said, Would you perform in Coronation Park for these idiots? But I won't be paying you," recalls Walker. "He scratched his head. I said, If you do it, other groups will too. He said he would. I thought he was the right guy to approach, and fortunately my calculation was correct. He was a gentleman, a real decent person. The rest of his band, whatever he said they did. They were all great guys. I can't say that about all the others."

The negative publicity meant that the Exhibition Stadium was filled only to half capacity. Sylvia Tyson, her then-husband Ian and their influential country rock band The Great Speckled Bird were on the bill: "It made life hell for the promoters. It was mainly young kids who wanted to get in free, and were using a political stance to create a problem. I thought it was pretty dumb."

The Band's Rick Danko had a wider perspective: "I didn't think it was gonna get out of hand. I'd just been around the world with Bob Dylan where people had booed and cheered us all over just for going electric. It was pretty light-hearted compared to what I had just been through."

The protest did not mar two days of extraordinary

music. The Globe And Mail, Toronto's establishment paper, praised the Dead and The Band. Rob Bowman thinks Traffic, in their one Festival Express outing, stole the show: "They did a long, long version of Feelin' Good. It was extraordinary, a jazz inflected improvisation, a very different kind of music and performance from everyone else on the bill."

ON MONDAY JUNE 29, 1970 the Festival Express hit the rails. Four special cars equipped with two lounges, tiny sleeping compartments and wired for Strats, Telecasters, Gibsons, pedal steel and Hammond B3s — with ample space for drum kits. On board, Janis Joplin, The Grateful Dead, Delaney & Bonnie, The Great Speckled Bird, The New Riders Of The Purple Sage, Eric Andersen, Leslie West of Mountain and Québécois superstar Robert Charlebois settled in for the 2,150-mile trip across the pink granite, pine and lakes of the Canadian shield north of Lake Superior and onto the Manitoba plains in.

The jamming, drinking and other extracurricular events started immediately. Buddy Guy knew he was in for



Eric Andersen:
"It was a once
-in-a-lifetime
thing."

Winnipeg Free Press

Final
Edition

15 CENTS
TAKES OVER THE PRINCE DOWNSIDE JULY 1, 1970

8,000 Young People Groove To Marathon Rock Festival

By JOHN CILLESPIE

Festival Express — Canada's equivalent touring rock festival — "killed" late-Winnipeg Tuesday night and changed with again Thursday morning.

In the interesting day, Wednesday, the Express played a marathon rock music festival at the Winnipeg Stadium. And the whole thing came off practically without a hitch as an estimated crowd of 8,000 to 10,000 young people grooved to their kind of music.

There was no violence. A stadium gate crash by the New Brunswick Youth Union in an attempt to force entry to the festival, Winnipeg police reported on several and ten people were reported to have been injured.

climbed about on steel beams, tried to jump over the roof and were caught by police. In some cases it was anything but peaceful.

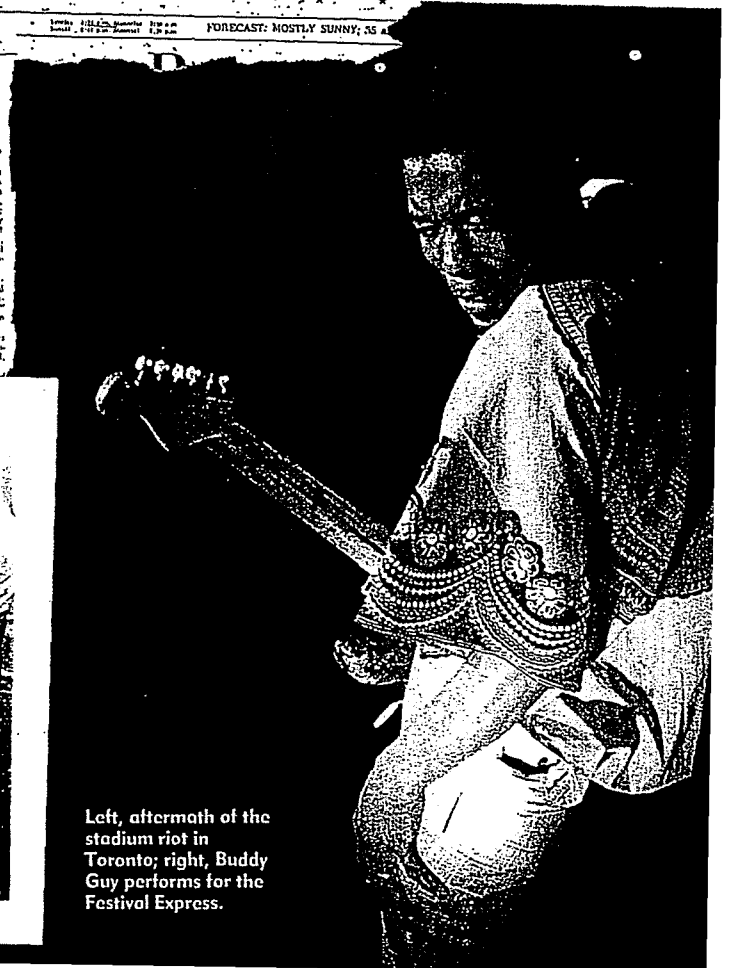
Janis Joplin, the festival's main rock vocalist, reported the performers' view of the wild west.

Impromptu in what she calls her "hacker clothes" and with a pile of glass and other debris she took the stage and said: "You know, you have a whole lot of people here, and you know that maybe you're never called, but if your head was covered with feathers, you'd sure as hell be a turkey."

In comparison to what they've seen elsewhere, the festival was a lot more laid back. The RHYMES promotion against "exploitation" advertisement posters turned out to be a waste of time.

A crowd of demonstrators staged a sit-in of the main stage after the gate and shouted, "Make it live, let it live."

Holiday Bag Mixed



Left, aftermath of the stadium riot in Toronto; right, Buddy Guy performs for the Festival Express.





We're jammin': top left, Jerry Garcia leads a roots and bluegrass session in the country car; right, more train scenes, Bottom left, thirsty artists rise to the challenge presented by a 'display size' bottle of Canadian Club. Main pic (right) Janis jams with Jerry.

the ride of his life. "They was real wild. They almost got me to go wild but something kept telling me, No, Buddy, you can't follow that crowd in that respect. I'd go get me a nap in my little private cabin and I'd come back and the band would still be rockin' and I'd plug in and play again until I got sleepy again. I'd take a little shot of beer or whisky, but I couldn't keep up with those guys. They was all usin' reefer or whatever else they used to get high. I was told if I didn't get into it, I wasn't gonna be big. They might have been telling the truth, but I was just enjoying the music so much people told me I must be high on something. But I was just music crazy. Everything was soundin' good then."

Most members of The Band left after each show for New York where final work was underway for *Stage Fright*, their third album. On his way back one night, Rick Danko had second thoughts. "I knew everyone was going back for the mastering and it would be in good shape. I'd already done my job and knew I'd have a great time on the train. It was a part of history I didn't want to miss. So I stopped the train. I remember getting up at six in the morning; I told the driver we're going to pull up to this sideroad and we're gonna stop the train. He said, 'You're not gonna stop the train.' I had these American flag pants and I said, No, we're gonna stop the train. I knew the fix was in. They were looking for us. I'd been up all night so I went to sleep [on the train]. Janis Joplin woke me up with a bottle of Southern Comfort."

ONCE AWAKENED AN AWESTRUCK RICK DANKO SPENT A lot of time on the train's blues car with Buddy Guy, Leslie West and members of Delaney & Bonnie's band. "Buddy Guy! Wow! It was a thrill to be in his company: one of my favourite guitar players. I picked up a guitar and started copying Buddy's licks. He was getting better by the second." Janis Joplin was queen of the proceedings, singing country songs with Danko and Jerry Garcia and belting out the blues with Delaney Bramlett and Buddy Guy. Eric Andersen saw his friend as the centre of the Festival Express rolling bacchanal: "Janis was the great feathered spirit. She was the one who loved to boogie, have fun and laugh, throw 'em back. She also had a serious side. She was a very intelligent person. She possessed great native intelligence. She was able to cut

through the shit real fast. Very smart. It was meeting a formidable brain in addition to her persona. That was really a kick." Buddy Guy: "She was always a fiery person. She could light up a fireplace with wet wood, that's the kind of person she was. She would walk in and call me 'motherfucker' before she would even say 'good evening', with a bottle of Southern Comfort in her hand."

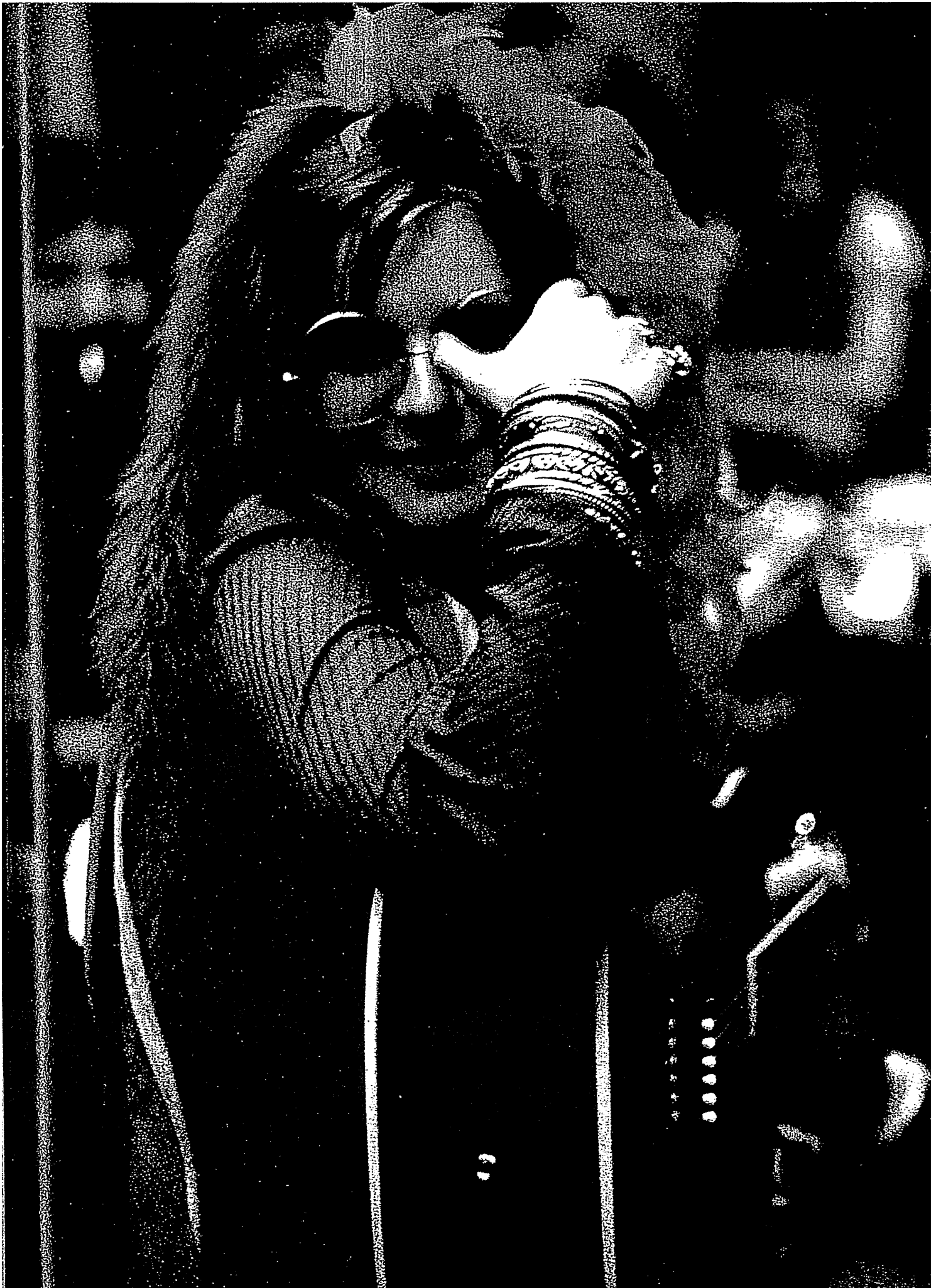
Sylvia Tyson never got close to Joplin. "She was never one of the girls. Ever. It wasn't her thing. She preferred to be with the guys. She was very out-front about that. She preferred their company – and the sad thing I felt about Janis on that trip, because it wasn't long after that she died, was that she was just really just beginning to sing, you know, it wasn't this sort of screaming thing."

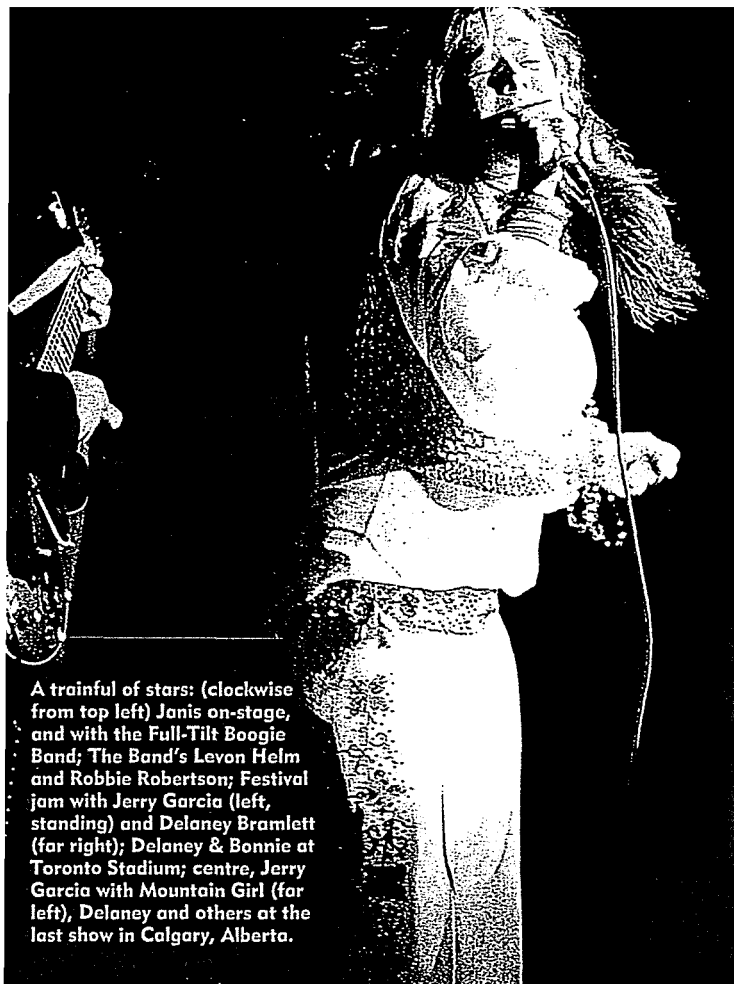
Rick Danko had other concerns. "By Calgary, Janis and I have formed a pretty tight relationship and I'm startin' to get a little bit worried 'cos I'm a young married man. Somehow I talked myself into going to a drive-in theatre with Janis, renting a car. She had a bottle of vodka and a bottle of Southern Comfort and I remember thinking, What the fuck am I doing? What have got myself into? So I called up Levon [Helm] and I said, You gotta help me out! He said, 'What are we doing?' and I said, We're going to a drive-in movie with Janis Joplin. So he helped me out. He was our chaperone." Danko's experience was not unique. John Dawson, aka Marmaduke of the New Riders Of The Purple Sage, now lives in the colonial city of San Miguel de Allende in Mexico. He met Janis Joplin on the train. "There hasn't been anybody like her. There's been some people who came close, but there's been no one, I don't think, who's been her equal. I'm prejudiced because I got dragged off by Janis Joplin on that train ride. That's what happened. I joined a cadre of a fairly large number of people who had that happen to them. It was fun and if she was alive today she'd still be my friend."

Back aboard the Festival Express, there was also a country car featuring members of the Dead, the New Riders, Andersen and The Great Speckled Bird. The songs of Hank Williams, Merle Haggard and Lennon and McCartney made the rounds. In film footage shot on the train, a ubiquitous Jerry Garcia seems to be playing acoustic or electric guitar with everyone at once. Buddy Guy says Jerry Garcia and the Dead helped convince him to leave his day job as an auto worker when he first visited San Francisco. Spending a week with Garcia and Joplin on a train ride across Canada was "one of the highlights of my whole career". For Buddy, the bushy haired, bearded guitar was a personal hero: "A good person. A person who don't come along but once in a lifetime. He was like a Mohammad Ali or a Rocky Marciano – these famous people that their shoes never will be fulfilled. Him and Jimi Hendrix are about the most creative people I've seen play a guitar."

On board the Express, a clean and sober Sylvia Tyson took it all in, book in hand, in bemused horror. "It was Delaney Bramlett's birthday and The Grateful Dead had made him this enormous cake. And I remember this young woman going around with this enormous cake cutting it into tiny pieces and I remember her saying, 'Which side of the cake do you want?' And I laughingly said, 'One side makes you

Ivan Kautsky (4)





A trainful of stars: (clockwise from top left) Janis on-stage, and with the Full-Tilt Boogie Band; The Band's Levon Helm and Robbie Robertson; Festival jam with Jerry Garcia (left, standing) and Delaney Bramlett (far right); Delaney & Bonnie at Toronto Stadium; centre, Jerry Garcia with Mountain Girl (far left), Delaney and others at the last show in Calgary, Alberta.



← smaller and the other makes you larger, right? and she said, 'Yes.'"

In Chapleau, a tiny stop en route to Winnipeg, a crisis arose: the train was running out of booze. Ken Walker seized the moment: "We passed around a hat and a delegation walked into the liquor store and bought it out. There was a display bottle of Canadian Club with a pump on top. I said, We'll take that too. We took the stuff back to the train and partied on." Sylvia Tyson suddenly found herself surrounded by increasingly drunk musicians. "Somebody you knew who smoked a lot of grass was very different when they started drinking a lot. It got a little testy at times. The drinking thing tends to be a little more aggressive."

THE EXCESSIVE PARTYING ON BOARD THE FESTIVAL Express gives Buddy Guy pause to this day, "My mother always told me when I was tryin' to learn how to swim, 'Son, if you wanna learn how to swim, don't jump into deep water 'cos you're not gonna make it.' It's just the limits that any of us have. And I just kept a strong mind on that. I was told by Janis Joplin on many nights, she would curse

and say, 'If you get high, you'll be wilder than what you are now.' I say, Janis I think I'm wild enough now. I've broke my ankles, fractured my legs jumpin' off stages that were too high, if I get higher, I'll probably kill my fuckin' self."

West of Lake Superior, as the train approached the Manitoba border, where the rugged forest of north-west Ontario begins to soften and flatten into prairie, the Festival Express began to go a little off the rails. "I remember sitting down in the bar car with Joplin," says Ken Walker. "She was giggling, saying we were gonna boogie across the country. Garcia joined us. At this point I had been up for about four days. One of my crew asked me if I wanted any uppers, any speed and so Garcia looked and said: 'Speed kills. And besides that I want to go up the engine, I want to drive this train.' So he called over one of their roadies who put out a line of coke on the table and what he didn't know was that there was about a seven-foot-tall CN waiter who was really an Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer there to protect us. He was standing there the whole time looking up at the ceiling. If Garcia had known he

Ivan Kukulsky (6), Ron Maitland/AP Photos

would have flipped out. This guy was in a waiter's uniform; the little jacket didn't go below his nipples, he was too tall.

"Anyway, we all did a line and I took him up to the engine and I told the engineer he wanted to sit in the driver's seat and pull the whistle. The engineer said, 'I don't know if I'm allowed to.' I said, 'This is my train. Do it!' So Jerry got into the seat and as we were going over the lakehead into Manitoba he pulled the whistle."

The train reached Winnipeg on June 30, the day before their Canada Day concert. The musicians were in such a frazzled state that the collective decision was made to get themselves together. Fortified by shots of vitamin B 12 supplied by Walker's personal physician, the artists left the train for a swim at the city's Olympic Pool.



Promoter Ken Walker manhandles Janis. "She was vibrant, larger than life."

rock'n'roll career. "I decided to quit. I felt the audiences weren't worth the effort. They didn't turn out and they were protesting. We were giving them too much."

IN 1970 GRAYDON MCCRAE, NOW AN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER for the National Film Board of Canada, was a university graduate selling shirts for \$5 an hour in Winnipeg's Eaton's store. The night before the Canada Day Festival Express show in the city on July 1, McCrae headed for a rail siding on the outskirts of town. "I went early in the evening the day before the concert and showed my battered university press pass. The guy nodded and I climbed aboard, found myself guided to a lounge car filled mostly with radio disc jockeys who were well on the way to exhausting the bar. I got a beer and was enjoying this scene, but noting that there were no stars present, when there was kind of a flurry. When I looked up, there standing beside me, wrapped in feathers and God knows what, was Janis Joplin. The room came to a halt. In her right hand she had a fizzing tumbler. She waved. Everyone crowded towards her. The only empty seat in the place was next to me. So she asked if it would be all right if she joined me. Within seconds the table at which I had been utterly alone was surrounded by sunglasses-adorned disc jockeys offering to get Janis another drink. She ordered vodka and tonic, bummed a smoke off somebody. It was one of the few times in my life I regretted that I didn't smoke 'cos I wasn't able to give her one of mine. I sat in utter awe. On a couple of occasions to reinforce a point she'd slap me on the thigh or squeeze me on the knee. I felt like the luckiest guy on the train. My sense of her was that this was a very lonely woman, but she was polite and was asked clearly to do this for the boys. She stayed for maybe 45 minutes and left. There may have been some competition for the chair while it was still warm."

MCCRAE WASN'T DISAPPOINTED WITH JANIS'S PERFORMANCE the next day. "She came out like she was shot out of a cannon. She hit the stage with an incredible sense of energy. I was close to the stage, and was awe-struck. She strutted. She almost bellowed. She had the most incredible voice. You knew you were in the presence of a performance that you would remember for the rest of your life. When she sang *Piece Of My Heart* it sent chills down your backbone. She was vibrant, larger than life." John Dawson of the New Riders took special notice of Joplin's shows: "She really impressed me. That was somebody that I did go out in the audience and watch. Her energy and the sound of her voice and the range and the way she controlled it."

With the Festival Express winding down in Calgary, there was yet another spate of political trouble. With protesters attacking ticket prices, Calgary's mayor, Rod Sykes, appealed publicly for a free concert. Ken Walker was not amused. "The mayor approached me and asked me to 'let the children of Calgary in free'. I refused and he called me Eastern scum and a capitalist rip-off son of a bitch. I still have his teeth mark in my fist. And then I jumped him and somebody was holding my arm back 'cos I was gonna drive a second one in his face. Since his head was on the ground I probably would have crushed his skull. He was about 110 pounds wet and I was about 230 pounds in those days. They were changing the voting age for municipal elections and he knew he would come off a hero and get the teenage vote." In the end, after all the accounts were

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1970, THE ARTISTIC AFTERGLOW OF the Festival Express was marred by tragedy. Eric Andersen had left Calgary for California in July to witness the birth of his first child. In the fall, he went to visit Janis. "I went up to one session of hers when she recorded Mercedes Benz. I took the baby up to show her. She was staying at the Landmark, but I was busy with the baby so we didn't get a chance to see her that much, but we talked every day on the phone. Then I walked up the street to a little local deli. In California they got a lot of telephone poles and chained to them are about eight newspaper boxes. I walked up and saw the headline, 'Female Rock Star Dead 25 Years Old'. And that was it. I think I'd talked to her the day before and everything sounded fine. Something must have happened, some kind of disappointment, whatever it was that made her score."

In her will, Janis Joplin left a list of invitees for her wake. Ken Walker got a call from Albert Grossman, Joplin's manager, to tell him he was on the list. He flew in from Toronto to California for her wake, in a little Sausalito club called the Inn Of The Beginning.

David Dalton's Piece Of My Heart: A Portrait Of Janis Joplin was recently published in the UK by Marion Boyars. The documentary Janis Joplin - Southern Discomfort will be shown in the Reputations series on BBC2 in June. A Festival Express movie, directed by Bob Smeaton, is expected toward the end of the year.

PEARLS

The best of
Janis Joplin on
CD. Selected by
Ben Edmonds.

Big Brother & The Holding Company (1967) is a rushed, restrained debut whose technical deficiencies present the band as pleasant folk-rockers with only *Down On Me* hinting at the band's power. *Cheap Thrills* (1968) gets it all and then some, from

Piece Of My Heart to Summertime to Ball and Chain. The set that made them stars is available as part of Rhino's *Monterey Pop* box, while the recently-issued *Live At Winterland '68* is essential. Her solo bow *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama*

(1969) tries a bit too hard to clean up the rough edges, but the posthumously issued *Pearl* (1970) found a way to make the passion work with professionalism. It features *Cry Baby*, *Me And Bobby McGee*, and *Mercedes Benz*. *In Concert* contains both *Big Brother* and *Full Tilt Boogie* performances. The four principal albums are all available with bonus tracks. The best of the above is distilled in the three disc box *Janis*.