

Jefferson Airplane

Fillmore Auditorium

San Francisco, CA

October 14, 1966

Late Show

<http://concerts.wolfgangsvault.com/dt/jefferson-airplane/51718-3230.html>

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San Francisco, CA
10/14/1966
Late Show
Tracks: 9
Total Time: 43:56

Signe Anderson - vocals
Marty Balin - vocals, percussion
Paul Kantner - vocals, guitar
Jorma Kaukonen - lead guitar
Jack Casady - bass
Spencer Dryden - drums

This remarkable run of six shows, which occurred over a three day period in October of 1966, featured Jefferson Airplane, Big Mama Thornton (a big influence on Janis Joplin, who was likely in attendance) and the most legendary, original lineup of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band. For scholars of Jefferson Airplane lore, this run has inspired endless discussion, as it encompasses the most critical transition in the group's history; the departure of original female vocalist, Signe Anderson, and the emergence of Grace Slick as her replacement. The issue of Anderson's final show and Grace Slick's debut has been the source of speculation for nearly four decades. With the emergence of underground radio in San Francisco, Bill Graham provided local underground radio stations with several sequences from his personal recordings from this run. These bits and pieces have circulated among collectors ever since. Between those (often mislabeled) fragmentary recordings and the disagreement between first hand recollections in print (including those of bandmembers and historians of the band) it seemed possible that we might never know when exactly the Anderson/Slick transition occurred. That was until now, as Bill Graham's nearly complete and accurately dated master reels of the Jefferson Airplane performances from this legendary run now reveal exactly when

the transition occurred. The last four shows with Signe Anderson and the first two shows with Grace Slick are here in outstanding quality, complete with humorous introductions by Bill Graham (on five of them), Marty Balin's announcement about Signe leaving the band, as well as Signe's actual farewell to the audience.

By the end of 1966, after performing together just a little over a year, it was becoming obvious that the group had taken the initial stage as far as it could go. They were beginning to head in a direction that would require them leaving their more traditionally structured sound behind. They would begin embracing experimentation in every sense of the word. Within days of this run, the band would begin recording much of their classic second album, *Surrealistic Pillow*. Soon they would experience international recognition and eventually become musical icons of the 1960s. These shows give one the opportunity to listen to the original lineup at the peak of their live abilities, as well as Grace Slick's initial tentative steps on her very first day as a member of Jefferson Airplane.

Unlike its early counterpart, the late show the first night of this run was a more adventurous affair. The difference in approach is apparent from the beginning, with Bill Graham's introduction, "Leader of the opposition, the Jefferson Airplane." Following the group's customary opening of a jet taking off roaring through the PA system, they kick things off with a take on Fred Neil's "The Other Side Of This Life." Unlike the early show, which began with

each singer fronting the band individually, this set has the three singers belting out vocals together from the start. Although taken at a slightly slower tempo than familiar later versions, the performance is immediately striking for its instrumental intensity and fine vocal blendings.

Following the opener, Balin introduces the next song, "Let's Get Together" as being written by "a young man from the old Spaghetti Factory named Dino Valenti." This song would later be immortalized by the Youngbloods, but this earlier arrangement is quite lovely, with Balin and Anderson taking turns on the verses and harmonizing on the choruses. Balin then leads the band through "Bringin' Me Down," and again, Signe provides the harmony vocal on the chorus. Another song from the debut album follows with "And I Like It" (introduced as "This Is My Life"). This slow blues number is quite different than most of the bands early material but both of these tracks show just how great a singer Marty Balin actually is, even at this very early stage. The next song, "It's Alright," is another obscure from the early days and it's surprising this song was never pursued more. Short, but so very sweet!

Balin and Anderson finally get a break after "It's Alright," and the musicians ease into a wonderful jam. The fact is pretty significant, as this is the earliest documented example of the Airplane attempting an extended improvisation. It's a fascinating performance for its

entire length (over 11 minutes), and contains remarkably intuitive interplay between the musicians. Few bands were approaching this level of improvisation this early on.

Marty and Signe return to the stage for "Go To Her," another excellent early Airplane obscure. This song would be tackled numerous times in the studio - during both Signe's and Grace's tenures with the group - but would never make in onto a primary album release. It's a strong rendition, with Anderson's and Balin's soaring vocals held aloft over Jack Casady's magnificent bass playing. The Airplane's set closes with "It's No Secret," one of the standout tracks from their first album. This set is truly captivating from beginning to end, and unlike the early show, showcases the strength of the band as a unit throughout the performance. It was sets like this one that made the Airplane truly stand out as one of the most groundbreaking bands in the San Francisco scene.

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Naughty Dog

Jefferson Airplane Fillmore (Oct 14, 1966, late)

1. Bill Graham Intro
2. Other Side Of This Life
3. Let's Get Together
4. Bringing Me Down
5. And I Like It
6. It's Alright
7. Jam
8. Go To Her
9. It's No Secret

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