

There Were Many Concerts but This One Was Special

By Morri Namasté

It was August 1, 1973. After being on the road for close to five hours, traveling from State College, Pennsylvania to Jersey City, New Jersey, we arrived at Roosevelt Stadium where the Grateful Dead was scheduled to play. Roosevelt Stadium was, and for all I know still is, a rundown old minor league baseball field. Deadheads gathered outside either waiting to get in or trying to obtain a ticket for what promised to be a very special occasion. It just happened to be Jerry's birthday and the sun was shining orange, if you know what I mean.

The beginning strains of Sugaree were floating down as I sat on the upper row looking out into the field where the stage was set. Deadheads crowded the field trying to get as close to the stage as possible. Somehow I found myself on stage standing next to Jerry who smiled and continued playing. As the tune ended I found myself leaning up on the stage as the band discussed what they were going to play next. The Dead played without a set list and at times it caused much confusion on stage. I was close enough to hear the debate. "I don't to play that song." "We haven't played it in a while so why not." "How about Eyes of the World." "No, that's for later." "Well, what are we going to play?" This banter went on for some time. Deadheads were familiar with this dynamic and they shouted out different songs for the band to consider. I just smiled.

After the concert I shared with my buddies my experience being up on stage. They quickly dismissed my story commenting on the quality of LSD consumed. But I was sure it had happened. After all, reality is in the mind of the beholder.