

# Lights out at S.F. Ballrooms

by Tari

It will be lights out tonight for the Family Dog Ballroom on the Great Highway.

The Light Artists Guild, representing more than 60 bay area light shows, will strike the Family Dog on Friday with picket lines around the ballroom.

What the sounds will be like (if any) is at this moment anybody's guess. Gerry Garcia, lead guitarist for the Grateful Dead—which is scheduled to play the Dog this weekend—has stated that he will not cross the Guild picketline.

If other rock groups follow Gerry's lead, both the Dog and Fillmore West will be shutdown by next weekend.

The Guild will strike the Fillmore West next Tuesday, after a Guild member finishes this weekend's previously-contracted performance.

Reaction to the strike from Fillmore proprietor Bill Graham was quick and caustic. "These scumbags have the audacity to threaten me with a picketline," he said.

Graham told the Tribe that the light show was not a draw factor and that he would fill up his ballroom just as easily without the light artists.

He said that the Guild had threatened both rock groups and other light shows before they asked to negotiate with him.

"We are not here to put them in business," Graham said, "but to support their craft. And we will determine on what level we support their endeavor."

The Guild states that both Graham and Dog head Chet Helm have refused to talk to the Guild as an organization—that they will only talk to the individual light shows.

The Light Artists Guild began to get themselves together about two months ago in an attempt to "further the light show as

an art form," as one member put it. While the members emphasize that they are not strictly a union, they can function in traditional union ways.

Last Monday night, the Guild voted overwhelmingly to use one union tactic, the strike, if the ballrooms refused to recognize the Guild as spokesman for the bay area artists.

They will announce the strike at a press conference Friday morning and ask rock groups and ballroom patrons to respect their picket line.

In general, the Guild is seeking "greater recognition of the light art." They claim that with the minimal wages that are now being paid, the light art, the most expensive of all the art forms in the cultural revolution, is being crippled in its development.

Light shows are being paid the same wages they were paid three years ago, which is only about a third as much as an unknown rock group gets for gigging the same ballroom.

"Like rock groups, we want our art to be self-supporting," one Guild member said. "The light show is an integral part of the rock environment; we are writing art history, but we want to expand and embellish the art."

With each group averaging about five members, the present rate of \$100 per night barely covers the cost of projectors, film, oils, cameras, and bulbs.

The Guild is seeking \$600 for 3 nights work at the Family Dog and \$650 for the same time at the Fillmore. (The difference is based on the difference in the two ballrooms' capacities.)

The Guild's third demand is that light artists be given at least 35% of the billing in all advertisements for a concert.

So far, the Guild is only beginning to receive response from local rock groups. Both Country Joe and the Fish and Gerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead have promised to honor the picketline.

The Tribe asked Garcia if he could be in trouble for violating his contract at the Dog this weekend by refusing to cross the picket line.

"It doesn't have anything to do with unions or picket lines," he said. "I know where the Guild is at and I know how much they need to do their thing. I would prefer to play, but I won't cross their picket line."

Those who are of the subculture and who are fed up with the Establishment's exploitation of its arts, feel the same as Gerry.

As one Guild member stated, "For the first time artists have sat together in the same room and have forgotten their petty competition."

The Berkeley Tribe is one example of people getting together and refusing to let the Man make them competitors. The Light Guild is another example of the same thing. The rock groups are next.

As one Guild spokesman stated, "Man, this is going to spread."



Eldridge, Kathleen and the Kid—moving silently in two's and threes they will return to America

## Rock Shucks for Bucks

The free/freak people all around this nation are beginning to feel themselves, to feel one another as brothers and sisters, as a people with a culture.

Rock and roll, dope and fucking in the streets don't make the pigs too happy—the pigs in the streets or the pigs in power. What we got and what we want doesn't fit in with what this country has laid out for us. Total freedom is inconsistent with their schools, institutions and factories.

But at the same time that the control-addict greed-creeps are moving to smash and imprison our culture, slippery tongued Madison Ave. money fiends, never ones to miss a shot, have come bopping on down into our midst to exploit and control the only aspect of the new culture that is controllable—Rock and Roll music.

With money, room service and black limousines, all that decadent shit that this society has been offering up a true happiness for years, they've been able to tighten their grip on rock and roll—turning it into a tool to make themselves more money.

The new scheme extends beyond the bounds of the record companies to about the only place where the people can still have personal contact with killer rock and roll—the ballrooms. These establishments imprison our music between their psychedelic walls and suffer the people through long lines to grab their money and pack 'em in.

Rock and roll stars, ballrooms, light shows, and all the associated paraphernalia are products and outgrowths of our culture, a culture and a people who are struggling for the liberation of the planet. A culture and a people who are under one of the heaviest attacks ever fronted by a fascist nation against freemen.

From Nixon's "no penalty is too severe" when he talks about dope laws, to the dude in the Justice Department who squeals

practised, performed and recorded, all at the whim of the control addicts. The people were out there—on the other side of the records and the stage, beyond flitting circle of company men.

What I saw when I got to Detroit/Ann Arbor brought up a lot of new ideas. The people, the ballrooms, and the new high-energy guerrilla bands can all be aspects of the solution. But first, and always, the people are the force of the change.

Detroit is a no-bullshit, facadeless, meat and potatoes factory town. There ain't a lot of fancy rhetoric or ideological arguments in Motown. The people dig the worth of action and move to solutions upon the recognition of the problems.

The Detroit community needed money for new programs that were being instituted: LSD (Legal Self Defense), a fund that supplies money and legal aid to all brothers and sisters held by the pigs; a free medical clinic and other such services. Detroit has its own R&R ballroom, the Grande, which has been taking money off the community for years.

Put the two together and you have a group of people approaching the Grande owner, Russ Gibb. After a little straight-on talk, the people came away with a %1 community tax on the Grande's earnings. The money is turned over to a committee representing different facets of the community; they decide the priorities and dispense the bread.

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about "round them all up and put them in concentration camps," to the Alameda County Pigs who shoot our people down in the streets, the attack isn't just forming up—it's here and it's moving.

None of us can be free until the pigs stop vamping on the brothers and sisters in Chicago and New York, on Haight Street and on Telegraph and all across this nation and around the globe.

Now, when the attack has begun, is when we need all the elements of our culture united—so what about rock and roll and its associates?

Recently I journeyed to Detroit to take care of some business. All along the road I thought about rock and roll, having recently interviewed a star and written a fairly inane article behind it. Something kept pricking at my mind about the dude that I'd talked to. Looking for complications and subtle nuances, I completely missed the obvious fact: the control that the record companies, promo men, and ballrooms exercised over each move of that dude's life.

He schuttled here and there,

## WILD WEST FEST

by Kathy

San Francisco will become the Wild West on the weekend of August 22 through 24.

The Wild West Festival will happen in nearly all of Golden Gate Park, starting Friday at noon and lasting through midnight Sunday night... may-belonger.

Everything and everyone will be there. Rock bands, country and western groups, mime and ballet troupes, operas, symphonies, light shows, environmental design trips, film showings, ecology setups, ice follies, wandering minstrels, puppet shows, possibly a live elephant, and most everything else that IS.

Cross-pollination of art is what it will be. And everything can be a form of art.

A warehouse full of 60-foot weather balloons is ready and waiting.

A film festival of all types is being set up, and multiple films will be run at once.

Forget about the drab and dingy Johns in G.G. Park; the environmental design people are making their own for the weekend.

The main stages for bands etc. will be set up at the soccer fields, the polo fields, and Speedway Meadows.

The only event that will cost bread will be the nightly shows in the west end of Kezar Station see p. 4