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CITATION INFORMATION

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FRANK KOFSKY

What I really want to talk to you about is the music and the social setting out of which it came. I won't ask for any biographical information except as it comes out in the interview—not your favorite color or anything like that. The interview's completely uncensored so you can use any kind of language.

I've heard a lot about communal bands. And I've talked to Big Brother and I've talked to Quicksilver and they give me the impression that yours is the last remaining even semi-communal band. So I think it'd be interesting to find out the genesis of the communal bands and then what happened to them and how viable they are after a group gets established.

Jerry Garcia: Right. Well, in our case, we thought that, in order for us to do our thing, it would mean we'd have to put everything else down and just do it. So that's what we did. Originally our getting together was a combination of—we thought the thing for us to do would be to live together, in order for our music to get closer together.

Frank Kofsky: It wasn't just an economic arrangement?

JG: It was economic as well.

FK: Yeah, but it wasn't primarily?

JG: No, no, no, no. It didn't start as that way originally. We've been living together on and off, when we've been able to find the right place to live, for the last two years. And we remain very close just because we come in contact with each other and we practice almost every day. The way I feel about it is that a band can play together without living together. I don't think that that really affects the music that much, you know? I think in our case the fact of our music being somewhat together is that we've all learned how to play in the band. We've learned how to play from each other. None of us, or at least none of the front people in the band—me and Bob and Pigpen and Phil—were in any rock and roll bands, as such, before we got together. And so we've all learned to play from each other, which makes it so that our music is much closer together, because we've gotten to the point where we can more or less read each other's minds—'cause our musical backgrounds for the last year, two years, have been very closely related.

FK: Why did you decide to give up the communal arrangement?

JG: We haven't given it up. [*Laughs*.]

FK: Oh, I see. I'm sorry.

JG: We haven't given it up.

FK: You talk as if it were in the past.

JG: No. Well, it's because the idea—it's really only—that's Bob Weir, our guitar player.

FK: Yeah, right. You can come and sit and talk, too, if you'd like.

Bob Weir: What's the talk, the conversation?

FK: Well, we're doing an interview for *Jazz and Pop* magazine and the interview will be transcribed and printed—.

BW: Which magazine?

FK: It used to be *Jazz* magazine; changed its name in the August [1967] issue, which isn't out here yet for some reason, to *Jazz and Pop*—the one that has Larry Coryell on the cover of it; you may have seen the issue.

JG: Right, yeah.

FK: Right. So we were talking about communal bands and I was saying that I'd interviewed the Quicksilver Messenger Service, and I'd talked to Janis Joplin and Peter [Albin] and how we've gotten into the communal thing.

JG: Right. Well, the communal thing is really just gregarious people like to have lots of people around, and when you have a lot of the people around who are stimulated—interested—it just presents more channels of communication. More ideas just flow. Being in San Francisco, it's like—it's a cosmopolitan place, in a way, and a lot of ideas come into it. And because of that, it's just a matter of being where the matrix of things are happening, you know what I mean? And you just put yourself in a position where you're getting the most information, the most kinds of ideas. That's the ideal situation to be in—to be in a creative position. The more things that are happening—.

FK: So the closer you are with the other musicians, the more the band will benefit as a result?

JG: I imagine. I mean, it seems to work out that way, but whether or not that's really the case is sociology.

BW: It would seem to me that the more you get into interaction, the better you get at it. And living in a communal scene stimulates your interactive activities.

FK: What about your tribe? I've understood that, at one point at least, you had a tribal following that you took with you.

JG: Well, we've still got it. I mean, it's all our old ladies and our equipment manager, fan club president and all that. We all live together. We've all lived together for the past couple of years.

FK: And they still all travel with you?

JG: Sure.

BW: Not all of the time.

JG: It depends on what the situation is—if it's economically feasible. That's what happens because we're always at our best when our whole

scene is around. It just makes us feel better as people. The whole thing about the road is that it's actually a drag. There you are, all by yourself.

FK: And you don't know anybody.

JG: Right, right, right. And so you bring your own scene along with you and that way you've shared a lot of experiences, too. When the tour is over, it's not so much a matter of us saying, "Well, here's what happened when we were on the tour," 'cause we were all there, you know? Nobody missed anything.

FK: Were you going to add anything, Bob?

BW: Oh, no, not at all. Not at all.

FK: How do you see the music that the band plays as being related to the lifestyle of the people who come to listen to it?

JG: I don't think it's related. I mean, I think it's only related incidentally, 'cause the music—music is its own thing, you know? I don't know whether or not it depends on lifestyle or not.

FK: Well, do you see this band somehow evolving out of the whole hippie scene in San Francisco?

JG: No, no, because we were all in a different scene.

FK: What kind of a scene were you in?

JG: We were all in different scenes, I should say.

BW: That's right.

FK: Maybe you should run that down for me.

JG: Well, the scene that I was in was coffeehouses, folk musicians.

FK: You were a folk musician?

JG: Right. Me and Peter Albin and Jorma [Kaukonen], Paul Kantner, David Freiberg of Quicksilver, and all these different people, we were all—and Janis Joplin—we all used to do coffeehouse gigs. We all used to play either solo or maybe with one or two other musicians and play unamplified instruments and that sort of thing. And there was a big grass-smoking scene, an acid scene, and that was all going on before the famous hippie scene.

FK: Sure, I remember that.

JG: But it's all the same kind of people, you know what I mean? The difference is that musicians are a little different than other people are anyway. Really, the musician scene is different than the hippie scene.

FK: Always has been, in this country.

JG: Right.

FK: What happened in folk music to drive so many folk performers out of folk?

JG: The very fact that it's such a dead thing.

FK: Dead in what sense?

JG: In the sense that there are no real lovers of folk music, you know what I mean? There's a certain point you can get to musically where there's nobody hearing you but other musicians. And that's okay, but that isn't really where it's at in terms of communicating something musically.

FK: There's no mass audience, in other words.

JG: No, no. There's no mass audience. And finally, you know, the interest died and we all got older, musically. That was our roots, you know? And it's just as well that there was no mass audience, 'cause none of us deserved it.

FK: Do you feel that you can express yourself more fully in the music you play now?

JG: Absolutely. Sure.

FK: That's why I never much cared for folk music, even though it was very vital.

JG: No, I don't think so. It was only vital, like I say, for the roots thing—for really getting into traditional music as a way of really understanding where music is at, on the traditional level, in this country. And that's largely what popular music is. Before the Beatles, popular music was, say, like a corruption of some very strong traditional strains.

FK: Mmm-hmm. [*Assents*.]

JG: And you know it [was] just bad performances, bad. But the ideas, the rhythmic ideas and stuff like that, came from the blues, came from country and western music and things like that.

FK: It seems to me that a lot of folk musicians, as well as their audience, look down their nose at popular music in the late fifties and early sixties.

JG: It was awful in those days. [*Laughs.*]

FK: Yeah. I never listened to the AM radio, I must be quick to confess, but now I do. So there must have been some change both in me and in what happens on the radio, what happens in popular music. You mentioned the Beatles. Do you think they were instrumental in bringing that kind of change around?

JG: Oh, absolutely, sure. They put fun back into music, you know?

FK: Who else?

JG: Well, the Beatles are all of us, really. They're the same people. They listened to rock and roll when they were kids and the difference was that there wasn't the heavy folk thing in England that there was here. When I first started playing guitar, the things that I was playing were things like Chuck Berry stuff, bluesy stuff.

FK: Same as the Beatles.

JG: Right, right. And then after a while what was happening in rock and roll no longer turned me on. I was getting older. I was getting smarter. I was reading more. You know? [*Laughs.*] I was growing up and the music wasn't, so my interest went to something else.

FK: You went into folk at that point.

JG: Right, right.

FK: But later on, when folk began to wither, the Beatles had shown what you could do in pop music, if you had a head on your shoulders.

JG: Then there was a start, you know? There was a start. There was also a start for beatniks.

FK: Yeah, Janis Joplin says she was a beatnik folk singer.

JG: Absolutely, right. We all were. We all were beatnik folk singers, no other source of income, you know?

FK: Yeah.

JG: On the streets. And that's a good place to have been, you know? It's a good place to have been.

FK: So you really antedate the Haight, in that sense—I mean, you go back before the Haight.

JG: Sure, sure.

FK: Yeah, 'cause I remember a lot of the things that the hippies think that they have discovered were actually occurring in Berkeley and San Francisco when I was—.

JG: Well, remember that the whole hippie movement is an invention of the newspapers.

FK: Yeah.

JG: It's not really what's happening. The things that are happening are the same people that have been plugging along various creative endeavors all these years. The only difference now is that the people who used to paint are now doing light shows and films; the people who used to play in coffeehouses are now in rock bands. But it's the same strain, you know what I mean? It's like an almost purely American artistic milieu. It's unique.

FK: Just brought up to date a little bit. Yeah, I'll say it is unique. What about jazz? You mentioned rock and roll, and you mentioned popular music and folk music, but you haven't said anything about jazz. But I hear a lot of improvising, a lot of improvised solos, in the new rock and it seems it either derives from, or is running parallel to, what's going on in jazz.

JG: Right. Well, jazz is another one of those things. Jazz is kind of like flamenco in a way. It started as a real strong traditional branch, you know, a Negro traditional music coming from blues and ragtime. It's essentially African with this European instrumentality and stuff breathed into it. And as it's grown up it's gotten to be so sophisticated, to the extent of becoming an art music. And I consider most jazz to be art music; the kind of

thing it's turned into, its real home is not in jazz clubs. Its real home is a concert stage or even places like the Fillmore and stuff like that.

FK: Yeah. I've been East in the last few years, and really, if you want to hear what is current in jazz you have to go to concerts, because that's the only place you can hear John Coltrane, that's the only place you can hear Ornette Coleman, that's the only place you can hear Albert Ayler. They won't work the clubs, and club owners won't hire them.

JG: No, because clubs are shitty, and they're bad places to work.

FK: Right, right. They are.

JG: Or they're a down scene, and the jazz scene has been associated with this sort of down scene for a long time.

FK: One of the things, though, that seemed to me was inhibiting about the concert was the damn thing was so formalized and stiff.

JG: Absolutely. Well, there it is. See, that's also the death of music. I mean, as soon as music is art music, what happens to it?

FK: It becomes a plaything for a few intellectuals and a few writers.

JG: Right, and then it's lost its big thread to the collective unconscious. It used to have a hold on it, in a sense. It used to be a moving force. But, you know, it can get pretentious.

FK: Yeah, right. And it isn't what the musicians themselves want. I asked John Coltrane about this point—I bring it up almost all the time about what kind of an audience he liked. And he said he liked a responsive audience, so long as it showed its appreciation, because he felt the audience became another member of the group.

JG: Absolutely. That's the way it should be. That's the way it should be. And as far as I'm concerned, the ultimately responsive audience is a dancing audience.

FK: Dancing audience, right. And even in the Straight Theater—which now, you know, has no dancing—still at least people don't look down their nose at you if you freak out in some way or other, if you're being moved by music.

JG: Right. You can still do it.

FK: The jazz audience has tried for so long to overcome its feelings of inferiority that they put that down very strongly.

JG: Absolutely. To be cool.

FK: Yeah, 'cause it's not cool, right, to move around, so you know, if some cat gets up and starts dancing around as people do in the Straight Theater, "Quick, put him out! Put him out!"

JG: Not cool. You don't blow your cool. Well, here's the thing, is that everyone's so tired of keeping their cool—me, at any rate—that I would rather just blow it, you know?

FK: Right.

JG: I'd like just to do another thing. Rather than concentrate on keeping my cool I would rather have my mind blown. You know? I would rather blow it. [*Laughs.*]

FK: Sure. That's what's nice about the light shows and the audience participation: it does blow your mind, washes you out and lets you respond in a different way than you would have before.

JG: Absolutely.

FK: In your own playing of improvised solos, do you find that listening to jazz has helped you, given you any ideas?

JG: Oh yeah, sure, absolutely. Absolutely. I really like—I listen to Charles Lloyd a lot. We've played with Charles Lloyd on a lot of occasions. And that's the kind of music that's sort of a new music, a new jazz, in a way. And it's closely related to the kind of stuff that we're doing, only we don't do it as well as Charles Lloyd does.

FK: Well, you do it differently.

JG: It's different.

FK: I don't think it's a question of, "as well as."

JG: Well, no, it's true. I mean, I would say that jazz musicians on the whole have a lot better chops than those of us in rock and roll. In the San Francisco music scene, almost without exception, everybody is self-taught. Nobody has book chops, you know what I mean?

FK: Well, very few people in jazz do; Charles is unusual in that respect. He has a degree, a couple of degrees, from USC. But most of the greats—Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Albert Ayler—they've studied formally but they're self-taught. They had to be self-taught 'cause the things that they're doing aren't—can't be—learned in the academy.

JG: No, right, right.

FK: When you play two registers above what's supposed to be the normal register on the saxophone, man, you have to teach yourself.

JG: Absolutely.

FK: There's nobody else. In fact, if you get taught, they'll tell you it's wrong, that you shouldn't do those kinds of things.

Let's see, [*pause*]—oh yeah, about chops. I don't know, though: I heard the Cream and it seems to me that if nothing else the musicians in that band have a tremendous amount of stamina, a tremendous amount of endurance.

JG: Absolutely.

FK: Which, you know, bespeaks something. I mean, it's not that easy to get up and play—.

JG: No, no, I would say the Cream are damn near the best group there is. Their music is really strong—I mean, really strong.

BW: Yeah.

JG: And it's not just a matter of volume, either. It's a matter of their understanding of time and their understanding of what they're doing. They have a very good picture of their music, you know what I mean?

FK: Mmm-hmm. [*Assents*.]

JG: And it's uniquely theirs. That's something incredible. That doesn't happen that often.

FK: Yeah, yeah. A lot of bands lack enough of an identity to be that strong, to play for that much time and still play something that's uniquely theirs.

I gather that, from what I read from the *Village Voice* and elsewhere, the Dead has played free concerts when they went East.

JG: Sure.

FK: Are you still doing that?

JG: Yeah. Oh yeah.

FK: Why do you make it a point of playing free concerts?

JG: Because it's another scene. Playing outdoors, like in a park or something like that and having people be there, not having paid, makes them not go through the kind of changes—when they pay their money they want to be sure they get their money's worth. And in the Fillmore and Avalon and places like that it means maybe sitting down in front and being sure you're hearing every note. I would rather people not have that kind of pressure—consumer pressure—so that they can just be there, we can just play, and something else can happen.

FK: It's not out of any feeling of obligation, though, that you play those?

JG: No, no, no. It's—with me, I just like to play.

BW: It gets you closer to the people.

JG: Right.

BW: And that's fine.

JG: Right. You get a chance just to talk to a lot of the people you know and see 'em and also there's always the thing of having people who might not normally ever see you or hear you or might not know what you're up to.

FK: How did the whole thing of a free concert begin? The reason I ask is that it seems to me that we were talking earlier about the jazz club and how detrimental it was for the music to be played in a place like that. And I've written some—and I'm going to write more—on the importance of taking jazz out of the club and putting it in places like the Fillmore as a first step, and free concerts secondly, so maybe if you rapped a little on that subject, the jazz musicians might be able to pick up on it and figure out how they could start getting their music—.

JG: Well, here's the way it started for us. About a year and a half ago we used to live in a big place out in the country. It was sort of a ranch.

And we had a party up there for all our friends in the city, who were all, at that time, most of the people in most of the bands, the guys who make the posters, and all the people. They came up to our house and we all got stoned. There was a swimming pool there, everybody took off their clothes and ran around, and we played outdoors and everybody who felt like playing played outdoors, and it was so nice to be able to dance out in the sunlight. You know, just move right out in the sunlight and just play, without any kind of show restrictions.

FK: Mmm-hmm. [*Assents*.]

JG: You know, where you have to have a set this long and all that stuff.

FK: Yeah. Forty-five—I've heard that so many times from the musicians. They hate to play forty-minute sets.

JG: Right, right, right.

FK: They want to play an hour and a half.

JG: Absolutely. Absolutely. So when you play outdoors you don't have any of those rules. You don't have any kind of rules, in fact. There's nothing particular expected of you because nobody paid any money to hear you, so you can do anything you want, for one thing. For another thing, there's the whole thing of when you're outside you have a different feeling in yourself. Your body feels different. The sun on you feels different. It's better than being in a dark place. You can see the faces of everybody you're playing to. You can get an instant reaction. And everybody is much less inhibited outdoors.

FK: So all in all, it's just a lot healthier scene.

JG: I think so. I think it's the healthiest, and it makes a difference in the music.

BW: Makes a difference in the attitude of the musicians and the attitude of the crowd.

FW: How does it change your attitude?

BW: It makes me play—want to play—for a whole long time, and here I can, so I do. You get into a thing of taking it easy and settling into what

you're doing. Instead of playing a show, we play songs that last for a half hour, forty minutes apiece.

FK: Just like a jazz band.

JG: Right. The stuff has a longer time to develop. It has a longer time to go through its changes. There's all this freedom for experimenting. You're not worried about maintaining a certain level of excitement, or whatever the thing is that—like when you're doing a show, there's a whole lot of pressures on you, of sorts. They're way in the back of your mind, but they're there, nonetheless.

FK: "These people paid three dollars to see me play and I have to do my best for them."

JG: There's just a whole lot less bullshit when you're playing outdoors. And it's a whole lot nicer.

FK: What are some of the other hang-ups that go along with being a successful rock group?

JG: Well, we're not that successful. We're not successful enough at this point for it to be a hassle. We're not hassled by teeny-boppers. We're not hassled by autograph-seekers that much.

FK: Has that been deliberately part of the group? I mean, have you kept yourselves from being a success, to some extent?

JG: We've tried to make it so that nobody thinks of us as stars. We've tried to make ourselves readily accessible and everything.

FK: That seems to be true of San Francisco bands in general.

JG: Right, 'cause, you know, who cares about—I mean, it's being successful if we're all eating. That's successful, you know? Anything more than that is invention.

BW: Being a star, for instance, you can't associate with anyone on a personal level because there's that star thing happening. It blows my mind severely and hurts me when, for instance, I'm walking down the street and maybe I have a feather in my hair and some teeny-bopper runs up and grabs a bunch of hair and pulls a bunch of hair out along with the feather. And that happened to me just yesterday.

FK: Oh, wow.

BW: And all because I'm a member of the Grateful Dead. And who needs it?

FK: Precisely. Who does need it?

JG: See, the audiences have been very groovy in San Francisco behind all that.

FK: I noticed that.

JG: And the audiences, they know when you're cookin', you know? It's really groovy. It's really groovy to play for a responsive audience and our music is at a level that it's still possible for everybody to hear it all, and to dig it all.

FK: I saw that at the Straight the other night when Janis was singing. You've read a lot about the San Francisco rock bands and their followings and so forth, and I've been in the East for two years so I've been cut off from everything that's happened here and was a little skeptical. But the other night when I was at the Straight and I saw Janis singing—I mean there was a very close rapport between her and the audience.

JG: Really?

FK: Those people worked with her and she worked—fed back—what they were feeding her.

JG: That's like the whole San Francisco trip, condensed.

FK: Is the existence of that audience that has propelled so many bands forward?

JG: Sure, to do good.

FK: Yeah.

JG: Because there's an audience waiting for you to get good.

FK: The amount of music I've heard here in four or five—well, I guess about a week now—is incredible. Then the amount of *good* music I've heard is even more incredible.

JG: I know. And now musicians are coming to San Francisco, so like there's getting to be a very heavy store of musicians in San Francisco.

FK: Yeah, like Charlie Musselwhite and Mike Bloomfield and all those cats.

JG: All those guys, right.

FK: They're moving their bands here and setting up their bands here, like the New York jazz scene in the forties.

JG: Right.

FK: If you wanted to make it in jazz you had to go play the New York clubs.

JG: And the atmosphere here is like super-accepting and everybody digs for you to succeed here, and digs for you to get good.

FK: Yeah, but the competitive thing doesn't seem to have become a big hang-up.

JG: It's no hang-up at all, in fact, because none of the bands are competing with each other—because we're all trying to do the same thing. We're all trying to make music.

FK: Make good music, yeah.

JG: And we all know where we're all at, which is that we're all students, you know? We're all learning. We all learn from each other, we learn from everybody that comes to town and it's groovy for us. It's groovy for everybody around.

FK: Who have you learned from recently?

JG: The Cream.

FK: What about Jimi Hendrix? I've heard a lot of talk about him.

JG: Nothing like the Cream. I mean, he's also got a three-piece band—similar sound, you know, because of the instrumentation—but the Cream is much heavier. They're much better musicians than Jimi Hendrix.

FK: Yeah, I heard the album. I didn't have a chance to listen to it very carefully. I heard it at Music City in LA, which is bad place to hear it but I wasn't that impressed with it. And then here, I've heard a lot of people talking about how—.

JG: Well, you should have seen them at the Fillmore, is all I can say, 'cause they played with a lot of very heavy bands. They played with Gary Burton's band. They played with the Electric Flag. They played with Paul Butterfield's band and with Charlie Musselwhite's band. And they made them all sound pretty old-fashioned.

FK: Oh, you mean the Cream.

JG: Yeah, the Cream.

FK: I did see the Cream. I meant I hadn't heard Jimi Hendrix's band.

JG: Oh, right.

FK: Yeah, I talked to Eric [Clapton], too, as a matter of fact.

JG: Yeah, well, I don't know what Eric says about it.

FK: He mentioned to me Hendrix. That's one of the reasons I thought I'd ask you.

JG: Right. Well, you know, he probably thinks one way about Jimi Hendrix. I mean Jimi Hendrix is very strong and he's got a fantastically good stage come-on.

FK: Yeah, yeah.

JG: And he's a strong musician, too. I mean, he plays real good. And his ideas are good. He writes good—he writes pretty good songs and stuff like that, but I really don't think that the whole level of that band is anything like Cream.

BW: He's one guy. He's one guy, but the Cream are three guys that are all, you know—.

JG: Equally heavy.

FK: Yeah. Yeah, definitely, it is a lot of an individual thing with the Cream.

JG: Right.

FK: Whereas Jimi, it's always "Jimi Hendrix and blank blank." And the "blank blank" can be changed from day to day and wouldn't make much difference, kind of junior-grade Paul Revere and the Raiders, in that sense.

JG: Right, right. The Cream have got a bigger thing together than Jimi Hendrix.

FK: Which maybe is what makes them heavier.

JG: I think so. See, the whole San Francisco orientation is for a group to work well together. It's not so much star-oriented.

BW: Janis, I think, is San Francisco's only star.

FK: Who?

BW: Janis Joplin.

FK: Oh, Janis. Yeah, I was gonna say—.

JG: And Grace Slick, too.

BW: And Grace Slick. Yeah, right.

FK: And even there I've noticed that Janis herself seems to be working to make it a band thing, although I notice on the radio they say, "Well, Janis Joplin and this and Janis Joplin—."

JG: Right, right, right.

FK: And you can't really help it because anybody with that forceful a personality is going to create an impression.

JG: Is gonna snap out a little. [*Laughs.*]

FK: Yeah, it just can't be helped. Another guy Eric [Clapton] mentioned that I'll throw on you is Frank Zappa. Do you have much chance to listen to his music and if so, did you form any impression of it? I know you were in New York the same time he was.

JG: Yeah, he was playing right upstairs from us.

FK: Oh yeah. You were at the Café au Go Go, right.

JG: [*Laughs.*] Right, right, right. We were at the Café and he was upstairs.

FK: What did you think? I'm sure you checked him out.

JG: I really admire Zappa. He's got a good head. He's a smart guy in a recording studio. And he's got his thing going. I myself am not—I don't like topical shit. I really don't like it. I would like to hear Zappa do a thing that was pure music because I think he could do a good thing. But

I think what he's doing is less than he's capable of, and I don't like that that much, you know?

FK: That's funny, hearing you as an ex-folk singer saying you don't like topical music, because a lot of—.

JG: I never played topical music. When I was into folk music my bag was instrumental things. I went through all the traditional instruments and that's what I was into. And I always preferred the music. I preferred the ballads. I never did go for topical stuff. That was never where it was at for me. And I still don't like it. Bad-rapping America is something that everybody does and there's no need to do it. I would rather see everybody working toward a higher level, you know? To ignore all the shit and to go on to the next step, whatever it is.

BW: About as topical as we can get is singing "Dancing in the Street."

JG: And it's really a flash to sing "Dancing in the Street" when you're playing in the street. Then it's really happening, you know? And that's beautiful. That's the kind of stuff I like.

FK: I gather your favorite place to play, then, is in San Francisco, as far as cities go?

JG: Yeah, but I like seeing new places, too, it's because it's amazing, man. There are little San Francisco scenes popping up everywhere. We played in Detroit and had a great time.

FK: Detroit is a fairly swinging city for a midwestern industrial town.

JG: Got a good scene going, a very good scene going.

FK: I guess you got to meet the people around the Artist's Workshop in Johnson City.

JG: All those people, they're very fine people. We really like 'em.

FK: Did you play any free concerts there afterwards?

JG: Yeah, we played Ann Arbor.

FK: You played the Grande Ballroom and then you—.

JG: Yeah, we played the Grande Ballroom and then we played Ann Arbor out in the park down there and had just a beautiful time.

FK: Yeah, yeah, there's some very nice cats there. Did you play in LA?

JG: Yeah, but we've never *really* played LA. We've played the Cheetah [Club] down there.

FK: Yeah, which is a drag.

JG: We played at all the shit places. And we can never get it on because it always brought us down so much. I mean, the people and the promoters down there are all horrible, graspy.

FK: [*Snapping his fingers.*] LA—LA hype.

JG: Right. The whole LA snap, the whole hype, you know: bread, dollars and cents, and that's all. We've never gotten it on in LA. We've played there but we've never done it.

FK: That's too bad. I notice you're gonna be in that big orgy at the Hollywood Bowl, which is gonna be kind of—you know, Jazz at the Fillmore used to be like that: fifteen acts, twenty minutes each.

JG: Yeah. We want to do that just for the flash of playing in the Hollywood Bowl.

FK: Yeah, but—.

JG: I know, nothing's gonna happen.

FK: How long are you gonna be down there? Maybe you can arrange for something at—.

JG: We'll try and do something. We're also going down pretty soon to go into the studio again. And we'll try and set up something.

FK: Have you thought about cutting your record live? I thought that the Avalon was set up now for [that].

JG: We're thinking of doing parts of the next album live. We're also gonna try doing stuff with combining live and studio. And this time we're gonna go in and fuck around, you know? Last time we went in four days straight and just played our shit. And that was it. And it didn't—I didn't like it. None of us liked it. This time we'll spend some time at it. We've got some nice heavy material and good ideas.

FK: I seem to have run out of questions. Do you want to rap about anything?

JG: No, I don't have anything to say.

FK: Unless I ask you.

JG: I mean, really, I don't have anything to say, you know? [*Laughs.*]

BW: If you come to San Francisco, be sure and wear a bone in your nose.

FK: [*Laughs.*] A bone in your nose. Right.

JG: And now that the summer thing's over maybe it's gonna start getting groovier here.

FK: Things look like they've cooled off—I got a parking space today.

JG: Right, that's because all the kids are back in school.

FK: Yeah. And the tourists are back home.

JG: Right. So maybe it's gonna get all right again.

FK: Yeah, San Francisco for the San Franciscans. "Americans go home."

JG: Right.

FRANK KOFSKY (1935–1997) was a professor of history at California State University–Sacramento. In addition to his scholarship, Kofsky was also a musician and journalist who wrote widely on jazz. This interview was originally intended for *Jazz and Pop* magazine but was not published.