

Hurlburt, Steve

It Didn't Matter

CITATION INFORMATION

Steve Hurlburt

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It Didn't Matter

STEVEN R. HURLBURT

It didn't matter ...

It didn't matter how much tickets cost; you got your money's worth.

It didn't matter if you were sitting behind the stage.

It didn't matter what you wear, just as long as you were there.

It didn't matter that the weather was JUST EXACTLY PERFECT. (Yes, it did.)

It didn't matter that Peter Shapiro _____. (Insert conspiracy theory here.)

It didn't matter that sometimes you couldn't hear Bob or the keys or Mickey in the mix.

It didn't matter that your Uber driver got in a knock-down, drag-out, screaming money-throwing fight with parking security in the middle of Lakeshore Drive. (You go, girl!)

It didn't matter that it took hours, minimum, to navigate the insane passageways of Soldier Field and the Field Museum. (Except that it did. A little.)

It didn't matter that Mickey wore 64 different T-shirts.

It didn't matter whether you had drugs or not. (*Wait a minute!* It always matters, one way or the other, if you have drugs.)

It didn't matter that Trey flubbed "Help On the Way." Or that Bob blew the return on "Estimated Prophet." (Actually, it added a touch of authenticity to it ...)

It didn't matter that there were dozens of people you'd hoped to see and didn't.

It didn't matter that the Uber surge rate after the shows was 4.4X or above.

It didn't matter that the exhibit at the Field Museum was, well, kinda lame.

It didn't matter that the security inside the stadium was non-fucking-existent. (*Oh yes it did!!!*)

It didn't matter that you missed 95% of the events going on around the shows.

It didn't matter they played "Cumberland" twice.

It didn't matter that they didn't play whatever it was they didn't play.

It didn't matter if you missed Santa Clara.

It didn't matter that grown men were weeping openly. Or women.

It didn't matter that the playing of "Standing on the Moon" didn't coincide with the orange moon rising over Lake Michigan.

It didn't matter that they played "Jack Straw" on the third day of July. (Actually, that was pretty cool ...)

It didn't matter that you dropped your camera and it broke.

It didn't matter that the last image of Bob you have in your mind is that "LET TREY SING" T-shirt he wore for the encore.

It didn't matter that Phil was pissed at the end of "Unbroken Chain."

It didn't matter that "Drums" sounded sorta the same each night. (Well, yeah, it sorta did.)

But ...

Trey fucking *mattered*.

It mattered that Phil kissed Bob *and* Trey in front of 70,000 people.

It mattered that this was “the last time.”

Candace Brightman mattered.

The fireworks mattered.

The intermissions mattered.

Mail-in envelope art mattered.

Traffic mattered; you dealt.

It mattered, cosmically, that Donna and TC weren't there. (But you didn't really miss them.)

It mattered that Hunter was not present on stage for *something*, for God's sake. That mattered.

It mattered that this show produced its own *Grateful Dead Movie*- “U.S. Blues”-guy on the rail in a white suit emblazoned with roses.

And most of all ...

It didn't matter that Garcia wasn't there ... Uh, *stop*. Garcia was there. Everywhere. At all times. *Larger than life*.

And that *mattered*.

Fare thee well.

STEVEN R. HURLBURT is a photographer, documentary filmmaker, and songwriter/musician. He is one-half of the Atlanta pop duo, accident of birth, and has recorded with The Loving Mad, Elegy, and Spunhuny. His award-winning documentary, *Dreadheads*, was featured at two film festivals, and he has produced three films based on Grateful Dead songs that completely reimagine Grateful Dead music in a post-Grateful Dead world.