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Former Grateful Dead manager Rock Scully is interviewed on a new CD commemorating the 40th anniversary of the "Summer of Love."

POSTED FEBRUARY 14, 2008

DEAD FOREVER

# A release featuring The Grateful Dead's longtime

## manager invokes an era alive on the walls of his Monterey home

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[n%20the%20walls%20of%20his%20Monterey%20home%20-%20Monterey%20County%20Weekly\)](#)

By [Adam Joseph \(/search?q=%22Adam Joseph%22\)](/search?q=%22Adam Joseph%22)

Rock Scully's Monterey home is a museum of rarely seen psychedelic artifacts, a rainbow of rock-and-roll rarities that throw anyone entering the room into an entranced state of awe.

There's a framed original poster from the late '60s promoting a concert at Sokol Hall in San Francisco held by the Hell's Angels, featuring Big Brother and the Holding Company and the Merry Pranksters. Original and limited-edition art by Stanley Mouse, a well-known album cover artist who conceived the Grateful Dead's "skull and roses" art, appear on almost every wall. Above a multicolored throw pillow resting on a navy blue couch sits a large painting entitled "Los Alamos." The signed print, another Mouse work, features an electrically charged coyote slithering through a desert that was at one time a nuclear testing site.

The living room of Scully's home feels cavern-like during the afternoon rainfall. For his part, the former Grateful Dead manager looks weathered by the hard-living lifestyle he led for many years; the smoky rasp of his voice could cut glass. But his eyes still light up behind wire-framed glasses when he reminisces about one of the most significant musical and cultural occurrences of his generation.

"There were important principles that came out of [the '60s]," Scully says as he exhales a pillow of cigarette smoke into an unlit fireplace. "Equal rights, women's rights, environmental consciousness, free thinking all came out of that time."

On Feb. 19, a CD interview conducted by local music promoter David Bean, the *40th Anniversary: Summer of Love Oral Archive*, will be released. The 55-minute Scully interview will add to the legacy of the 1960s through first-person accounts of life in 1967. The CD is a follow-up to *Twenty Years on the Bus with Garcia and the Grateful Dead: Living with the Dead*, Scully's 1996 biography, written in collaboration with biographer David Dalton.

Scully and his peers have enjoyed a recent resurgence of overwhelming interest in the 1960s. Interviews focused around the 40th anniversary of the summer of 1967, the "Summer of Love," which peaked at the Monterey Fairgrounds' groundbreaking Monterey Pop Festival, have been constant.

"Over the past year I've had so many interview requests about the Summer of Love and the 40th anniversary," Scully says animatedly. "They're even using bands from the '60s as background music on commercials."

Scully returns to his vast collection of memorabilia to help illustrate the essence of the era: the Dead's gold record *American Beauty*, signed by the band; intimate black-and-white photos of Janis Joplin, Jack Kerouac and Jerry Garcia; an unfinished canvas painting of Scully's late wife playing guitar, painted by Mouse; album art of just about every Dead album released under Scully's management. His surroundings aren't just a collection of memorabilia, but a celebration of his oldest and best friends.

In his small dining room, also bursting with one-of-a-kind Grateful Dead and '60s paraphernalia, a framed certificate of honor awarded to Scully on Sept. 2, 2007, by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom is humbly placed waist high, almost hidden.

The certificate states, "On behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to recognize and honor Rock Scully for his successful management of the Grateful Dead from 1965

to 1985, and his involvement with Summer of Love.”

A milestone award from Madison Square Garden given to Scully in 1979 hangs next to the certificate, honoring him for the “sale of more than 100,000 tickets at Madison Square Garden.”

Before Scully made waves in San Francisco and New York, he went to Carmel High and was classmates with Sam Farr, now a congressman. He finished high school in Europe and attended college at various institutions including the University of Vienna.

In Europe, Scully’s musical tastes progressed. He began listening to jazz and blues at a time when kids his age in the United States were listening to Elvis. He was turned on to LSD in Europe around this same time.

In 1963, Scully moved back to the States and lived in San Francisco’s Haight District while attending San Francisco State and promoting local music shows with college friends. Scully refers to this period as the beginning of the “emerging cultural lifestyle” that eventually became the “hippie lifestyle.”

“We found an alternative lifestyle to the day job and family because things were not looking good with all that was happening in the world. It was a real bum time for people our age,” he says.

During this “bum time,” Scully says, the Dead “became very pro-peace.”

The Grateful Dead played music that inspired and celebrated free thought and expression peacefully.

The whirlwinds of new ideas gained greater momentum from large amounts of hallucinogenics.

Scully lights a cigarette without revealing any evidence of the lighter’s flicking sound or its flame. He tells a little-known story about an early acid test held at San Francisco State’s cafeteria that he attended with the members of the Dead.

“[Ken] Kesey was in trouble [with the law] at the time so he led it from the college radio station booth across the street,” Scully says. “His voice came from the speakers and every once a while his face was projected onto the walls. Everyone thought it was a recording.”

Scully tells story after story, intertwined with cigarettes. Each story is a new adventure that echoes Tom Wolfe’s *The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*.

Scully’s *Oral Archive* celebrates a time and a band that never will be forgotten. For Deadheads and non-Deadheads alike, the CD is a capsule of American history, culture, and music.

Scully’s tale of the first time he heard the Grateful Dead, when they were called The Warlocks, during a 1965 acid test hosted by Ken Kesey at San Francisco’s renowned Fillmore Auditorium, stands out as a vital escapade.

Scully’s description of the Fillmore acid test sounds more like Cirque du Soleil than a gathering of hippies watching a band.

“Ken Kesey had built this super structure of rigging – basically scaffolding with platforms,” he recalls. “It was maybe three stories high...It was in the center of the Fillmore Auditorium and there was a stage on one end and balconies that run around the sides.

"Keseey and Babbs were at the top of this thing with goggles on and their white jumpsuits that were all tie-dyed and covered with an American flag..." he continues. "Keseey was telling everyone to 'be in your own movie and let your freak flag fly.'

"It was like they were on the deck of the Enterprise."

Scully conjures a cacophony of imagery as he describes the scene: mirror balls, strobes, black lights, liquid projection on the walls, art sculptures and, on the stage, the Grateful Dead playing their mind-expanding version of the blues.

"I was just astounded. [The Dead] were raising the roof, literally...it was just an amazing experience."

A few days after Scully's introduction to the Dead, he became their manager at the request of the Dead's sponsor and soundman, Owsley Stanley, better known for the prolific amounts of powerful LSD he manufactured and distributed.

At the center of one of the most revolutionary music movements the country had known, Scully was responsible for arranging all the stops for a band that toured the U.S. and Europe constantly, while still getting them into the studio (he says only the two albums the Dead produced were any good) and making sure their drug use didn't dive into self destruction. He recalls the '70s as a coke-infested quest that continued until the band was on the brink of madness. "That's when we knew," he says, "that we had to take a break before continuing on tour."

Bean asks Scully about the Jan. 14, 1967 Human Be-In, considered to be the true beginning of the Summer of Love. Scully describes the multi-day festival at Golden Gate Park as a "gathering of the tribes...a celebration of ourselves and what we were all about and to see who we were...this was a chance to celebrate our newfound culture and our newfound consciousness about the planet and about the earth and about getting along with each other and about what we had been experiencing over the last two years."

The Be-In was successful beyond its romanticized façade of sex, drugs and rock and roll, Scully says. "It was a celebration of freakdom," he says. "In the '60s of gray, worrisome, wartime America, this was a flash of color and light explosion of Day-Glo and faces painted and colorful clothing 'be damned with the gray flannel suits.' "

About six months after the Be-In came the Monterey Pop Festival, which Scully calls "an amazing meeting of minds."

As magical as 1967 was, Scully says the buzz of the growing scene caused the Haight and surrounding areas to become overpopulated with runaways, STDs and drugs. These troubles prompted Scully to open a free clinic for runaways and start a hotline. By the end of the year, the Dead moved away from Haight-Ashbury and San Francisco.

Scully says that soon after 1967, the scene caught on worldwide. "Every city has their own Haight-Ashbury – their headshop, their imports store where you could buy your incense and paisley drapes...it spread really quickly, fortunately."

***40TH ANNIVERSARY: SUMMER OF LOVE ORAL ARCHIVE will be available starting Feb. 19 at Borders in Sand City and [cdbaby.com](http://cdbaby.com)***

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