

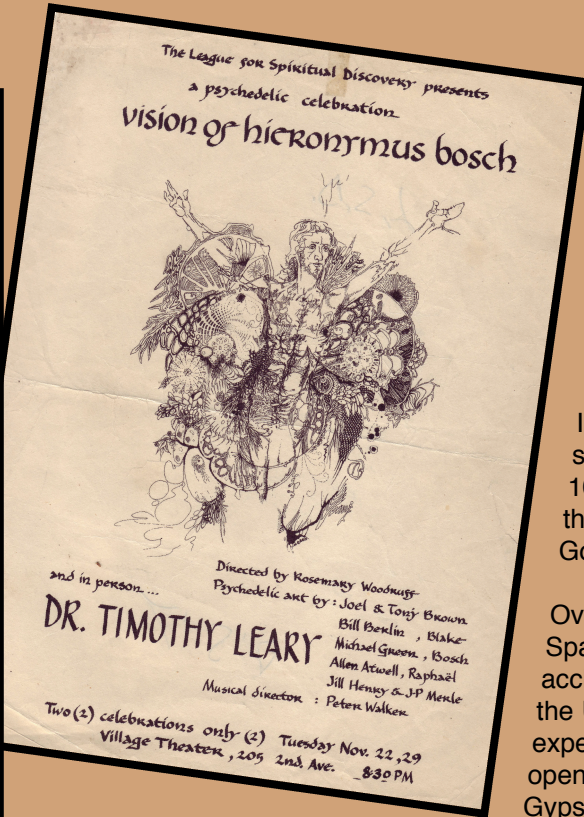
are going to lose, like the Chicago 7 trial, you make all your appellate points and actually win the case eventually. In the case of Al's Market, he won on many other procedural points, and embarrassed the judge with a reversal. Al was found innocent on appeal. Bill had been so confident that he had just been playing with the biased, political, hack judge.

### The Common Denominator

My manager, Eugene Skuratowitz, was managing the band Stone Front, and later would be managing Canned Heat. I think he was also the tenant of record at the Garwood mansion. On a private island on the Detroit River, separating the US from Canada, and with only two neighbors, Garwood had 47 rooms. It came complete with private indoor boathouse, indoor Olympic pool, and an immense central ballroom, which held two thousand Detroit young people every weekend, (much to the dismay of those two neighbors). Jeep Capone (Al's Grandson) played drums with the house band Stone Front..I was the opening act.

In and around Detroit, I did dozens of local radio appearances, and many across the river in Windsor, Ontario. Eugene was a brilliant strategist and manager in many ways. At the Goose Lake, a Michigan festival with 100,000 paid admissions and 200,000 gate crashers, (thanks to the bikers who jumped the fence and pulled it down), Eugene arranged for me to play for ten or twenty people at a time for three days, until the final morning when the entire crowd demanded that I be allowed to perform. I played the material contained on this album. Except for the March on Washington, it was the largest crowd I ever played for, and one of the only times these songs were performed live before a non-radio audience.

In many ways this album represents my requiem for the 60's. I wrote the original lead sheets on the back of guitar cases and on the red-eye flights back and forth between LA, NYC, SF, and Detroit. Experiences shared and words recalled, coalesced into a kind of song cycle that is unique to anything else I've recorded. The anti-war movement coalition was a success! After the end of the war was announced, the coalition could not agree on a new agenda, and disbanded.



After a year or so shuttling between NYC and Detroit, I moved to Woodstock where I have maintained a home base since 1971, continuing to travel, study, practice, grow, and enjoy the wonderful adventure of life. Lord Buckley would have said that I was “blown out onto the cool sweet sands of serenity”. I love the country life: driving a pick-up down a country road with my dog, playing at the Joyous Lake, eating breakfast at the Bear Cafe, saying “good morning” to Bob Dylan, drinking too much too early in the day with Freddy Neil, hanging out with Karen Dalton and Sandy Bull.

I have had years of time to study the Indian raga sheet music from school, practice the Spanish guitar, raise kids and live a healthy life. After 10 years as a house musician for the Joyous Lake in Woodstock, in much the way that I was the house musician and opening act for the “Cafe Au Go Go” during the mid 60's, I had a home musical base.

Over the last 13 years I have had a chance to renew my education in Spain, with great teachers in the “Sacromonte” in Granada, and much acclaim in the “Triana” of Seville, Paris, Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, the UK. Lisbon, Madrid, and Catalonia. The most meaningful musical experiences of my life have been in Spain. I could go on and on about the open hearts and great musical moments that I have shared with the Calo Gypsies of Andalusia, both learning from them and playing for and with them.

Now I play “applied theory” in every key, every day. I hope to record more, and take snapshots of my growth like litmus paper in the chemical brew of life. I am almost 75, and life gets more exciting every day. Living in the Latin culture, learning the theory of the guitar from Spanish masters. I feel uniquely blessed to have achieved many of my goals.

Albert Grossman said something to me once that Maynard Solomon had been aware of back in the Vanguard days of the 60's. He said, “The common denominator of music that captures attention, is that it carries the listener away, takes them out of themselves for an interlude somewhere else, somewhere beautiful, or poignant, and then brings them back.”

I hope I have achieved this with my stories and my music.

Peter Walker  
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Liner notes excerpted from the forthcoming book,  
*Light Upon The Path, A Guitar / Teaching / Biography* by **Peter F. Walker**

## Before and After “Freedoms”

It was 1962 and Edward M. Kennedy appeared during the planning of a 72-hour “Hootenanny” in Cambridge, Mass. The event was conceived out of legal research into “marathons.” They were declared illegal in the late 1920's and I was curious why. It turned out that one of the reasons is because they attracted large crowds. So, performances in Massachusetts were limited to 72 hours. That put the kibosh on marathons, but left open the possibility of a 72-hour, three day event (unheard of in 1962 because it hadn't been done since 1928).

I thought that with so much folk talent available I would try to put on a show, and I got a permit to stage it (with the store window of the Cambridge Folklore Center as the stage). I blocked off the street, and mounted speakers in the vacant upper windows of the building at 91 Mt. Auburn Street. When Len Chandler arrived from NYC it became a civil rights movement event and really took off. After speaking with Kennedy about the goals and motivations for the event, he offered his support.



The Holy Modal Rounders, Len Chandler, Tim Hardin, and hundreds of others lined up to play over the next three days. A couple of top DJ's volunteered as hosts. Eventually the entire Cambridge fire department was out trying to “make a hole” in the huge crowds that were blocking the streets of Harvard Square and grid-locking the Harvard Commencement Exercises that were unfortunately scheduled for the third and peak evening of our “Hootenanny”. The Cambridge Chief of Police said that I would “never do another event in his town again.” I viewed this as a compliment.

The following year, after the assassination of JFK, we scheduled the event in Boston's Copley Square in support of The Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Dr. Martin Luther King. Len Chandler had sold me on the idea of supporting Dr. King the previous year.

That winter, I planned a drive across country, headed for California. I had spent the previous winter in Spain and North Africa and had my second direct experiences with the Gypsy and Arabic cultures and music. At the request of the editor of the Cambridge Chronicle, who was a friend of the Kennedy family, I stopped in Dallas for a few months. It was an unusual request but not really. I was only in my mid twenties but I had an extensive amount of experience as a traveler and observer.

I stayed in Dallas long enough to play, audition, or apply for playing work in every venue, restaurant, and private club within 20 miles of the city center. I got a job playing Spanish Music on a weekly

radio show broadcast direct from one of the clubs operated by one of Jack Ruby's peer group. It was about a block from Ruby's closed “Carousel Club” and was operated and frequented by the same thugs, cops, drunks, and hookers who had patronized the Carousel. One night I saw the owner threaten a beautiful Dallas call girl with a wicked, glinting sausage knife.

On a Saturday night after several weeks on the job, two tall, well-groomed federal agents who worked for Bobby's justice department showed up at the club, recognized me from Boston/Cambridge, and said hello. They were quite surprised to see me, and it showed. Because they were dressed like young Justice agents, they appeared to be what they were. Their greeting was noticed by the bouncer and chief henchman of “da boss”, whose eyebrows shot up upon witnessing the exchange.

Two days later I overheard a conversation between “da boss” and his “number one”. I had just arrived and paused in the stairwell, which led to the upstairs club. The odd acoustics of the building brought their conversation to me clearly from the back office. They were discussing their plans for me and my wonderful lady for the coming weekend. They were not good plans. I crept back down the stairs, got into my car, stopped in the cliffs for my lady, and less than 45 minutes later we passed the Dallas city limits headed west.

### It's a funny thing about Karma

Puerto Vallarta was still an isolated paradise, accessible only by air or by a very bad and dangerous road from the north. I had come in over the mountains from the east, the first gringo ever to come directly from Guadalajara, in an old Oldsmobile hard top convertible held together with Baling Wire and prayers. The last half-day was on the back of a cattle truck but it was an incredible adventure and the story appears on the album as “Fifty Miles” (on two flat tires). I still go back to visit the places on the road referred to in the song.

A tall lanky long term ex-pat named Jungle Jim had a house at the end of “Los Muertos” Beach in the old town. He had been there longest of all, and the little house sat on a group of rocks at the end of beach above the crashing surf. It was idyllic, with flowers hanging everywhere, and a thatched roof. Because Jim had another house in town with high walls, a garden, and a beautiful Mexican wife, he often stayed there, and loaned the charming beach house out to friends.

One evening while out for a walk I stopped by to see if Jim was home. Jim wasn't, but another guy who I knew was. He was reading to John Barrymore, from the “Book of The Dead”. Seeming annoyed that I had just “dropped in”, he left the room for a moment.

John looked totally out of it. His speech was slurred; his balance was off. “Are you OK, John?” “What did you take?” He said he took Mescaline; it was his first time. I asked him how much he had taken.

His answer scared me, and made me angry. The guy had given him five times a normal heavy dose. Ten times what I would have taken, had I taken. I had apparently, inadvertently, walked in on an attempt to “Program” JB. Mindcopping was a serious problem among early experimenters.



I spoke quickly and quietly, urgently, into his ear. “John, would you like a cheeseburger?” His eye’s lit with a spark of life. I explained how we had found a source for ground meat, and that for the first time ever in PV, we were making huge, US Style, dripping cheeseburgers. For hungry US surfers and horsemen living on tacos, beans, chicken and tough steak, cheeseburgers were a gourmet dream taste of home. John lurched toward the door.

The other guy came back into the room and said to John, “Hey, where you going?” John said, “Going for a cheeseburger with Peter.” I took John back to the little house I shared with my Lady and through the night, we talked him down, played music, made sure he was safe. We ate cheeseburgers and a huge fruit salad in our candlelit garden. We became friends.

John could do all the trick riding stunts that you see in the movies and we galloped in a pack for many a mile. For 40 cents, the vaquero’s son would leave horses tied outside our little house in the morning. Steve McQueen had a house there, and the only dog in town who could beat ours when out riding. John Wayne came in his yacht and tried to get Barrymore to come back to Hollywood. Elizabeth Taylor still had a house by the river connected by a romantic bridge to Richard Burton’s.

I had a chance to practice the music that I had learned in Spain, and began studying Indian music on tapes of Ravi Shankar from John’s Chrysler Station Wagon. Being a resident Spanish guitarist meant that over several months all the other guitarists for many miles around came to spend an afternoon under the mango tree in the courtyard, swapping chords and musical phrases.

One day while out walking the path from Jungle Jim’s Beach house, I was surprised to see a sweating, portly representative of some agency whom I had briefly met before in Boston/Cambridge. He was waiting by the path near the beach, pretending to fish. He said, “hello”, and I asked him what he was doing there. He was there, he said, on a “fact finding mission” to “investigate the psychedelics” and that he had been appointed to “The New York State Narcotics Commission”. I pointed out that I doubted that they had much jurisdiction in PV, and besides he was fishing in the wrong spot. He said he was there with the “Director of Midwest Narcotics Enforcement based out of Chicago”. I recommended they try the drugs before condemning them.

Agent “Ghost” said, “what’s the effects?” I said, “they make you psychic”. “For example, if you put your line right over there between those two rocks you will catch a fish”. He said, “bullshit” and did so just to prove me wrong. To his complete shock, he immediately hooked a huge 2 kilo bonito. I was just screwing with the guys mind, as I knew from diving where the fish lived, and was glad when after a brief furious fight, the fish escaped. The agents were psyched out and hooked though.

Robert Graves, the Poet Laureate of England, was a winter resident. He had seen my lady and me playing happily on the beach and mentioned us in a poem. His mistress, who was a French or Spanish Citizen happened to be on the beach that day. She offered to give them each a dose of acid. Normal dose, pure Sandoz. One rep. palmed the tab and faked taking the dose that she provided and tried to act high. The one from Chicago that did take the LSD wound up standing on a balcony railing, high above a crashing sea, conducting 11 mariachis with a rose, naked, with the lady from the beach. He left on the first plane in the morning.

Immediately thereafter began a period of intense scrutiny, involving the Mexican Federales. An 18 man Federal team was dispatched from Mexico DF to PV at the request of the American Authorities and arrived about the time that everyone was packing and leaving. Barrymore went first. He stopped by my house before he left and tore the sound system out of his Chrysler Station wagon so I could continue to study Ravi’s music. I ran the 8 track tapes off a car battery for the rest of my stay.

Through John I met Ben and Mickey Shapiro, who became good friends and took me under their wing. Ben was a filmmaker and music producer who produced the Indian Music festival in the Rose Bowl. It was through him that I got to meet, study with, and hang out with Ravi Shankar. It was also through Ben that I met and went to school with George Harrison at Ravi’s “Kinnara” School in LA in ‘67. At the Indian Music Festival, I was approached by Ali Akbar Khan, (“I will teach you that which you are seeking”) and invited to his school. I left the next morning for Berkeley and “Ali Akbar College” or Aka Khan Sahib U.

Tim Leary

I had known Tim since ‘62 and hung out at the Newton house while Tim was still at Harvard. I was impressed with his sharp mind, the experiments with LSD and divinity students, and the studies in reducing recidivism rates at Mass. state prisons that were conducted at Harvard. Up at Millbrook one weekend Tim found out one of the guests had some hash. Not a lot, about half a finger. Tim asked to see it and took it directly to the toilet and flushed it. Because of the recent raids, it was the right thing to do. I took note. This is what you do when you find strange drugs in your house.

Tim was mercurially fluid in his intelligence and functionality. I rode into town with him once from Millbrook, wild from a weekend on the 4000-acre estate in the woods. As we arrived near his destination on the Upper East Side, Tim reached for a paper bag containing his Harvard Brooks Brothers light weight cord blue professor uniform with Harvard school tie and loafers. He emerged from the VW van in seconds transformed from wild guru in shorts and sandals, to Harvard professor, in a matter of moments, like superman emerging from the phone booth.

Millbrook, was originally founded by the man who invented the can opener, (held 27 patents). The gatehouse alone was bigger then most large houses. There was a private system of unpaved roads and bridges. Signs misdirected you away from the main residence, which was occupied by one of the wealthiest men in the world.

My favorite among the regular guests was Charlie Mingus. Sometimes I would sleep in the music room and Charlie would play on the piano late at night a falling cascade of notes. I also used to see Charlie along the Bowery helping fallen lost souls from the jazz world late at night, with compassion, encouragement, a few bucks, an address of some help.

I think Tim chose me to play the music because of the Eastern and Indian influence. The East West fusion fit in with his presentations. My music became part of the “set and setting” for some inner space travelers. I was asked to be the sound track for the “celebrations”. I would play to settle the crowd down as they came in and be the opening act. I was also given a small budget to arrange for other musicians. The “celebrations” went on for a year or so, up to the time of the release of Tim’s record with Jimi Hendrix. Then his legal problems interfered. We remained friends until his death.

The Loft

Through an old friend from Boston, I wound up living in the “Jacques Lowe Loft” in NYC. At that time all of the official photos of the JFK administration were kept in a two-story loft on 6th Avenue in what previously had been the residence of Jacques Lowe, the official photographer during the JFK Administration. Jacques had fled to France shortly after the assassination, but had left 1000’s of copies of the various photos taken before and during JFK’s tenure.

When I took occupancy in August ‘68 the loft was still under the constant supervision and scrutiny of “da boys” from Brooklyn. The history of the loyalties of the friends of the Kennedy Family was unknown to me but included some passionate, loyal, and obviously very “heavy” gentleman, who never presented badges or ID but acted with an unmistakable air of authority and confidence.

One of their immediate associates had been a previous tenant, who was currently out of the country on a long term sabbatical. Something about a Federal Warrant for Utilizing Jacques Lowe’s State of the Art Photographic Equipment to produce a photographic master printing plate of a government bond.

Each of the thousands of huge enlargement photos were of meetings and their participants, particularly the reactions of key figures. Jacques ran the camera every few minutes or sometimes every few seconds. The multiple reproductions of these sequences, who was in the photos and their expressions, had great significance for some parties. It required an expert to identify many of the people in the pictures, but there were hundreds of copies of entire sequences that were significant, in Lowe’s opinion. Da boys from Brooklyn stopped by once a week, usually someone well dressed and extremely intelligent, accompanied by someone who dragged their knuckles as they walked. They kept track of the photo inventory by measuring the heights of the stacks with a yardstick.

The Crazies

I was at a meeting with anti-war movement representatives to coordinate the Biafran campaign. The anti-war movement leaders complained that all over the country, their organizations and meetings were being penetrated and diverted by new members who advocated violence, and who invariably turned out to be police who were disrupting a peaceful movement with violent advocacy and actions. I suggested a solution. Since they knew their telephones were tapped, they should start talking in hushed tones about a new super secret, super violent branch of the movement: “The Crazies”. That way they could identify the police among the new applicants to join the various movement groups. Anyone who tried to claim that they were part of or affiliated with the non-existent “crazies” would obviously be lying, and therefore would be an undercover-violence-advocating-cop, or other undesirable.

It was incredibly successful. Besides enabling the movement groups to identify undercover applicants for membership, the “threat of the crazies” was taken seriously. Budgets were inflated as agents and agencies fought for budget shares to counter and establish a presence within it’s ranks. That summer, I was on my way through the mass of people in D.C., to play harmonica on the main stage with some of the cast from “Hair” for one of the million man marches in D.C. against the war, (they should have been called gas-ins). At that event, there were two obvious police “undercovers” fist-fighting in a circle over who was the genuine “crazy”. Even as late as the Woodstock Festival, some undercover officer set up a booth for the “crazies”. It was an open secret by then and was comical.

William Kunstler

After playing for a John Sinclair benefit in Detroit, I finally met Bill Kunstler in person. He was giving a lecture at the Gar Wood mansion on Grand Jury system abuses for the appeal in that case. He ticked off fact after fact in his favor, without notes and in a voice ringing with conviction and quiet injustice. He was the Clarence Darrow of our generation. Later, when my kids were ready for school, I credited him with inspiring me. I went to City College, got a Paralegal Certificate, and paid for one of the best schools in Manhattan for the kids with the income from representing immigrant taxi drivers.

Bill’s office had been available for procedural advice on various federal cases that came up, and we had spoken by phone before on a few occasions. He had advised us on the Richard Alcroft marijuana test case in ‘67. Richard had developed and sold the concept of a kaleidoscopic projecting light machine, and with his new wealth, he was planning to challenge the marijuana laws. He walked into an automat, sat down next to two NYC Police officers, and pulled out a bag of pot. He said to the cops, “Look, that’s pot”. The cop said, “put it away buddy, you don’t want to get into trouble.” Richard said, “No, its pot, you’ll have to arrest me.” They took him to Bellevue. In the course of the case, Kunstler would give his time to recommend a “pro se” clerk at a federal courthouse, or recommend what was or was not possible for a defense strategy.

Larry Davis and Piggly Wiggly

Kunstler’s theme was a “case of a black man defending himself against white crooked killer cops.” When Davis shot six cops in the Bronx, Bill somehow convinced a mostly African American jury in the Bronx that the cops were there to kill his client over a drug deal gone bad WITH THE COPS (who were crooked and were in fact there to kill him). The bizarre thing was that it was true, and the Bronx jury believed him, and acquitted Davis on the charges. My own experiences had convinced me that Kunstler’s defense was completely plausible, but still I was surprised that it was believed.

On a lighter note, was the “Al’s Piggly Wiggly Market case.” Bill lived in Olive, the next town over from Woodstock, and took the case because he knew Al and bought his groceries there. At issue was an allegation that Al, who sat on the County legislature, had a conflict of interest in selling groceries to the jail. The entire case was political in nature and Al’s enemies were harassing him with a criminal prosecution.

Dialog with the local judge:

“Good morning, Mister Kunstler. For what purpose does eminent counsel from NYC approach the bench today?”

“Good morning, your honor, I would like to make a motion for you to recuse yourself from hearing this case.”

“On what grounds does eminent counsel from NYC request my recusal??”

“On the grounds that you are a sexist pig your honor.”

“Would eminent counsel care to explain his remarks prior to being jailed in contempt??”

“Why, certainly, your honor. I can prove that on many occasions you have told jokes to your cronies and friends casting woman in a negative light, referring to them as “broads,” “bitches,” and “cunts”. I will have female witnesses in this trial and you have proven yourself biased, and thus unfit to hear their testimony.”

“Motion is overruled,” said the judge.

I had a chance to talk to Bill about this exchange, and asked if he had won the appeal, (after losing in lower court). He said he did, but on grounds other than the “sexist pig issue”, (which was on the record). The lesson learned, was that if you



Kunstler and Walker at Garwood

