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EXPERIENCE**

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OF MIND-MELTING ART,
INTERVIEWS, ANECDOTES
AND MORE!**

**Compiled By TONI BROWN
with LEE ABRAHAM and ED MUNSON**

**Foreword by JORMA KAUKONEN
Afterword by DENNIS MCNALLY**

G. Kromer '91

Looking Back on *Relix's* Own Long, Strange Trip

Former editor Toni Brown captures the history of the magazine's first three decades in a new book

BY JEFF TAMARKIN

TONI BROWN MAKES one thing very clear in her introduction to *Relix: The Book—The Grateful Dead Experience*. “I never set out to publish *Relix*,” she writes, “but I was a pivotal player in taking it where it needed to go.”

She's being modest. For 22 of this magazine's 35 years, *Relix* was Toni Brown's baby. She was the one who decided what made it onto these pages and what didn't—and why. It was her voice that set the publication's tone, which, by extension, meant that Toni Brown served as a spokeswoman for the ever-growing community that swelled around the nexus that was the Grateful Dead. To resort to a familiar but apt cliché, it was a long, strange trip and *Relix: The Book* (Backbeat Books), in 256 full-color pages, is a vivid reminder of what it was like to take that ride.

Brown wasn't there at the beginning. *Relix* was founded in 1974 by two Deadhead tape traders, Les Kippel and Jerry Moore (who passed away earlier this year). Moore served as the first editor, followed by this writer for a couple of years. Brown came on board as editor in 1979, 10 years after witnessing her first Grateful Dead show, and became publisher in 1982, as Kippel concentrated on running *Relix's* record label and merchandising arm. When the magazine fell into her hands, Brown felt the tug of destiny. “I believed, from the moment of my first Grateful Dead show, that I was supposed to do this,” she says now.

What Brown could not have anticipated were the ups and downs that would follow, including the necessity of covering Jerry Garcia's health issues—beginning in the '80s—and his ultimate demise. “I dealt with the darkness and I did what I had to do, but I tried to keep the light and what was beautiful about the scene, the music and us as people,” she says.

That's not hyperbole—anyone who's met Brown knows that that's just the way she speaks. “I was never your typical editor-publisher,” she says. “It was always, ‘Let's see what feels right.’ I went organically, and to this day that's the way I work. That was what I carried with me and that's what I felt *Relix* should exude.”

Relix: The Book is filled with hundreds of reprints of articles, photographs (including



many of the covers) and even letters to the editor, going back to issue number one. Jorma Kaukonen contributes a glowing foreword and Grateful Dead publicist Dennis McNally provides the afterword. In between, is a look back at the scene as it unfolds and morphs. It's “a happy hippie helping of my experience with *Relix*,” says Brown, who, while working on the book, re-read every single word that made it into the magazine from the beginning through its sale to a new publisher in 2000 and the end of her editorship in 2001.

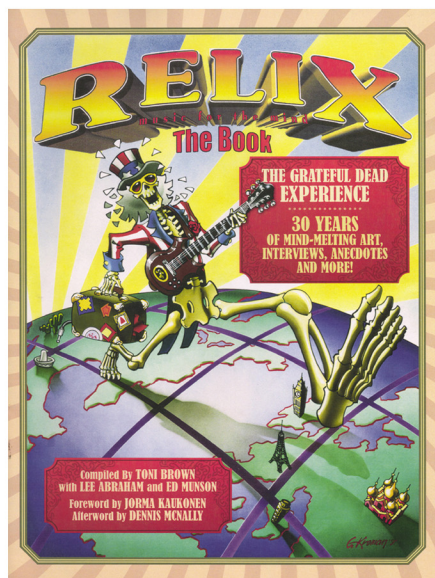
“To me, it was a privilege to take the best of *Relix's* early years and compile it,” says

Brown, who is also a performer and recording artist in her own right (her new album, with Ed Munson, is titled *State of Mind*). “There's some amazing stuff in there. I wish I could have put twice as much in the book, because there was twice as much worth putting in. It was very hard deciding what not to include.”

Naturally, to paint an honest portrait, Brown had to chronicle not just the high times, but also the low times. “As I read through every issue, it was like knowing the end of a really sad movie. When Jerry died it was like the train hit the wall.”

Even after Garcia's 1995 death, Brown remained focused and forward-looking. *Relix*, which had always covered other artists of interest to Deadheads—and, admittedly, some that were not—carried on, applying the same ideals to the nascent jamband world. “I always tried to keep the best of us in *Relix*,” says Brown. Now the best of *Relix* is in one place, for all to see. ●

Contributing editor Jeff Tamarkin has been writing for *Relix* for much of its 35-year history, serving as editor from 1978-1979. *Relix: The Book—The Grateful Dead Experience* is available at www.tonibrownband.com and via bookstores and standard online booksellers.



“I dealt with the darkness and I did what I had to do, but I tried to keep the light and what was beautiful about the scene, the music and us as people.”

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JBO reviews RELIX, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience by Toni Brown

By JamBandsOnline.com

Article by Joy Rose

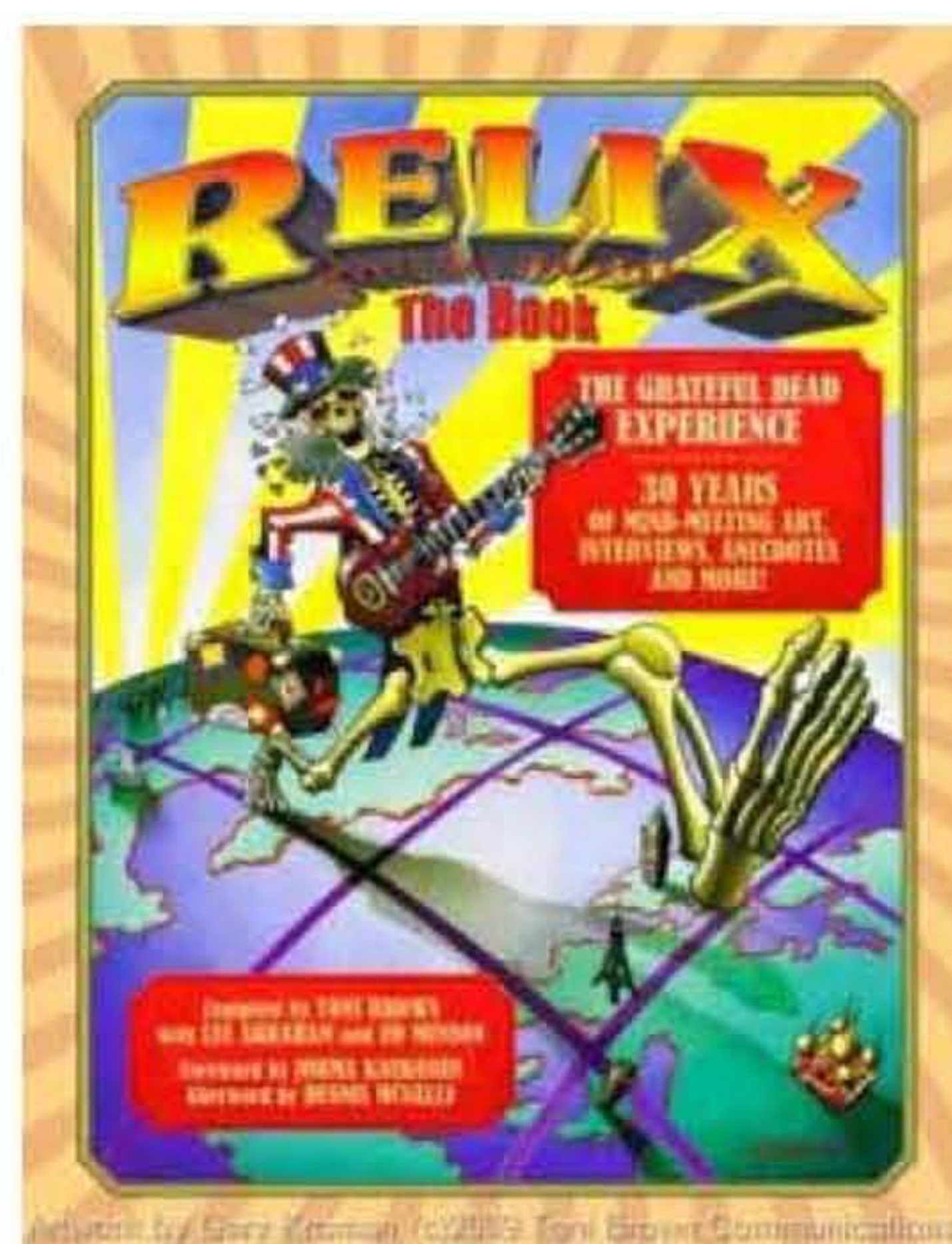
I'm not going to lie and say I've made it even halfway through *Relix, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience*. Toni Brown, the magazine's longest publisher, has packed it full of artifacts of Dead and jamband history, and I don't want to miss one cartoon, one letter, one article, one cover. This is the kind of book that deserves a lengthy, leisurely read. And so it remains in my bathroom, where I can steal a few moments each day to feed my inner tour baby during these winter months. It will be slow going, but that's just fine with me. I'll relish.

However, I have skimmed ahead for you.

The book is a compilation of art and letters from the beginnings of *Relix* magazine, the jamband scene's flagship publication. Brown was not around at the publication's beginning when Les Kippel started it in 1974 as a communication tool for tapers. But she was involved in running the magazine and eventually took over as editor in 1980, after Jeff Tamarkin had led the charge for two years. Brown edited *Relix* for the next twenty years, and was responsible for its golden years as well as defining the genre that had become known as jambands by the time she sold the mag in 2000.

It's a thorough, tie-dyed journey through selected pages from *Relix*'s past, from the first issue's promise for Dead information (despite the unfortunate timing of the band's hiatus), to the cover of the 2000 Summer Special celebrating the 150th issue. Included are cartoons, editorials, fan letters, and delicious, evolving cover artwork by Gary Kroman, and photos by Herb Greene and Bob Minkin, among many others. Each member of the Dead is interviewed, including extended family members Dan Healy and lyricists John Barlow and Robert Hunter. I've already spent a few days each of the exquisitely intricate—and quite incestuous—musical family trees of the Grateful Dead (Hart Valley Drifters, anyone?), Jefferson Airplane/Starship, and New Riders of the Purple Sage. Brown's editorial voice guides along the journey sparsely but presently, giving notes on the larger social implications of the music and the scene that surrounded it.

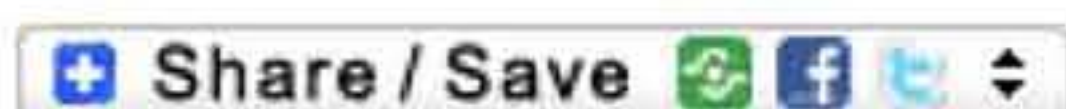
Interesting twists and turns of the magazine's history are revealed, including the late-'70s shift away from a focus on taping (apparently, the band wasn't totally down with it) and toward mainstream reporting that resulted in covers being devoted to Blondie, the Blues Brothers, Joan Jett, and Ozzy Osbourne. When Brown became editor, she vowed to "Put the Dead back in *Relix*," but fortunately in the next decade she didn't exclude the new generation of jambands who were proliferating by the early '90s. In fact, she encouraged them. It was 1989 when writer Mick Skidmore contributed the first review of an interesting young band called Phish in a column called "Too New to be



Known.”


What other magazine has featured, on its cover, Jerry Garcia with a Raggedy Ann on his lap? Or tales from the Festival Express? “My Wife Was a Teenage Deadhead”? Great moments in Dead history are charted: the release of Ben and Jerry’s Cherry Garcia flavor, messages from Grateful Dead mail order ticketing, and reports on those newfangled online bulletin boards. Also included are notes on jam family bands Merl Saunders and the Dinosaurs, the traveling HORDE tour, and awareness of hemp, recycling, and mandatory minimums. The original “We Are Everywhere” montages are included, of Heads next to Dead-monikered businesses in locations across the country. Current *Relix* publisher Pete Shapiro even appears in its pages in a photo for his film *A Conversation with Ken Kesey*.

Everything that we associate with jambands today stems from this scene, and Brown did a great job of preserving the best of this history. If you’re anything like me, you’ll be savoring it page by page for the next little while! If you need me, I’ll be in the bathroom.



This entry was posted on Wednesday, October 21st, 2009 at 10:35 PM and is filed under [Artists](#), [Books](#), [Relix](#), [the Book](#), [The Grateful Dead](#). You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0 feed](#).

One Response to “JBO reviews RELIX, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience by Toni Brown”



David Shehi October 22, 2009 at 12:41 AM

great article! and what a nice ending. i was going to buy this book anyway, but now i AM going to buy this book. make sense?

#18

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The Reader: Drivin' That Train - Flagpole Magazine: Colorbearer of Athens, GA

the reader

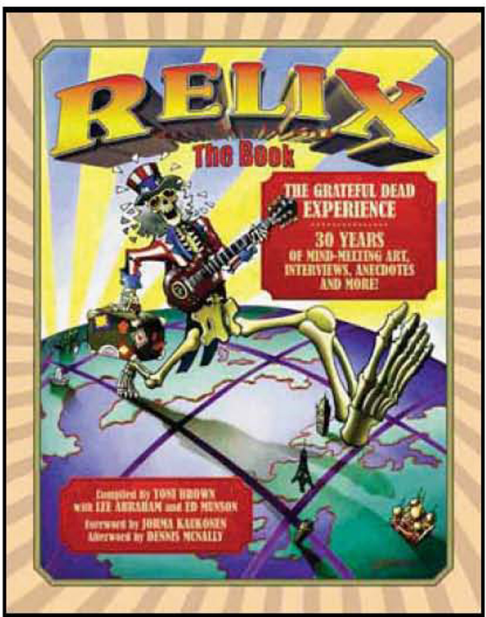
Drivin' That Train

Eric Clapton and Jerry Garcia are on a plane over the South Pacific when it develops engine failure and crashes on an uncharted island. Clapton and Garcia survive but are captured by cannibals. As the tribe fires up the big pot, the chief goes to his captives and asks Garcia if he has any last requests. Garcia says, "Could I have my guitar? I just wanna jam on 'Dark Star' one last time." The chief then asks Clapton if he has a last request. Clapton says, "Eat me, *now*."

That joke was a lot funnier before Jerry died.

Unlike many of my friends, I've never been a fan of the Grateful Dead. They were, without a doubt, a great band, and one can't help but admire their musicianship, longevity, stamina and (sorry, hippies) business acumen—there are Fortune 500 companies who would kill for the Dead's brand identification. They made a great deal of music and much of it was quite good, especially the stuff on the quintessential albums *American Beauty* and *Workingman's Dead*. Jerry Garcia was a gifted multi-instrumentalist, both in the Dead and in his numerous side projects (I'm pretty fond of the work Garcia did with mandolin hero David Grisman). But I've never been able to get behind the band. I don't particularly care for jam bands, first of all—I don't care how good you are, after 30 seconds a solo becomes just self-indulgent noodling. Secondly, while I support any obsession that doesn't involve children or barnyard animals, the sheer quasi-religious mania of some Deadheads, even 15 years after Garcia's passing and the band's breakup, is startling and often disturbing even to other Dead fans.

Still, 30 years of constant recording and touring is nothing to sneeze at and there is no end of



documentation of the Grateful Dead's career. Besides the official recordings, merchandise and books by the ton, the band's committed fan base created an endless well of unofficial material, especially bootleg tapes, which the band cheerfully accepted as part of the cost of doing business with their particular audience. Fan tapes of Dead shows circulated among the network almost virally, with aficionados poring over and comparing shows like Talmudic scholars. It wasn't long before the network began to organize, and that's where *Relix* magazine came in. Initially the first newsletter to serve as a trading post for tapes, in 1973 the rag quickly became a fanzine for Deadheads to submit their (often hazy) recollections of shows, art, poetry and other appreciations of the band and for the editors to post grapevine news on the doings of the Dead.

Shortly after *Relix* went regular, however, the Dead announced that they were going on hiatus. Left without any Dead news to report, the magazine turned to reporting on other bands on the San Francisco/hippie/jam-band axis (Hot Tuna, Jefferson Starship), and the fanzine turned into a full-fledged music magazine, which is still on the newsstands today. Though *Relix's* focus has broadened considerably (including reportage of new wave artists during the '80s, which outraged the Dead fan base), the magazine remained steadfast in its coverage of the Dead, its spinoff projects and its direct descendants like Phish and Widespread Panic.

Longtime *Relix* editor **Toni Brown** has collected and distilled the best of the magazine's Dead reportage into a new collection called *Relix, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience* (Hal Leonard Books, 2009), from its humble, amateurish origins to the slick production of its later years. For non-Deadheads like myself, it's an interesting look at the Dead phenomenon from the fan's-eye point of view. Unlike most of the books out there by rock historians, Brown's book reproduces the pages of the magazine and gives awarts-and-all look at both the staff's work and the contributions of road warriors and fellow travelers, producing a time-capsule effect that is both fascinating and often wince-inducing.

Fans will, of course, gobble this up, as well they should. All of the primary players are interviewed, including elusive lyricist Robert Hunter, at the various stages of the Dead's career, and it's interesting to see how the band evolved through their experiences. Garcia naturally gets a lot of coverage, both in life and death, but oddly enough, there is no mention of either his diabetes or his heroin use, both of which contributed to his demise. Maybe the fans didn't know or didn't want to know, but it's their forum.

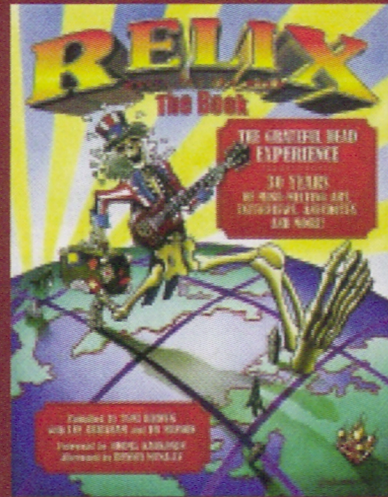
Scattered here and there are occasional stray articles, a piece on Stevie Ray Vaughn here, a remembrance of John Lennon there, and a gallery of *Relix* covers that tease at the other artists that we may see if the magazine's editors decide to publish future retrospectives, but this volume is all about the Dead, an engaging piece of musical history for those of us outside the cosmic circle, an indispensable treasure for those inside.

Relix The Book

BOOK

The Grateful Dead Experience

Backbeat Books



If you've never had the pleasure of thumbing through a copy of *Relix Magazine*, you've been missing out on one of, if not the best, publication around as far as your source for not just coverage of all things Grateful, but also content on jam-bands and dead-influenced artists. If you're already familiar with *Relix*, then you already know how amazing this book is. Well, even though my expectations were high, they were still exceeded the moment I had the opportunity to flip through this book. A wonderfully vibrant and thorough 250 pages, filled with as much eye-candy as a deadhead could want. Interviews, content about band mishaps, gonzo-covered events, photos, vintage etchings and old *Relix* covers... all coalesced without losing that nostalgic feel from whenever the content was published. Normally, collections like this sacrifice a bit of the original vibe for the sake of convenience, but this particular collection didn't, nor did it have to. There's been a boatload of Dead books put out, but in my mind, this ranks at the very top. **SF**



"Relix: The Book " recounts 30 years of the Grateful Dead and jam band history



October 13, 9:31 PM Music Examiner Paul Gargano

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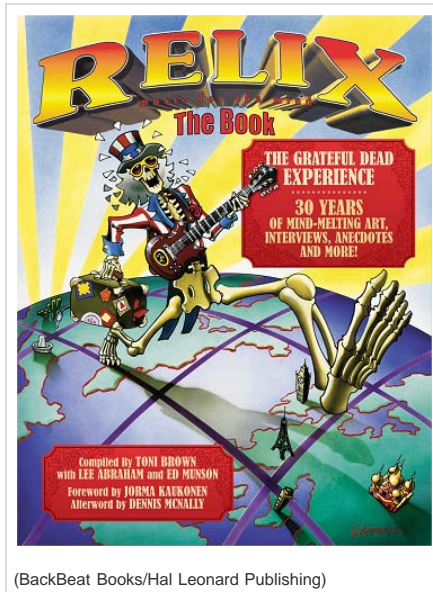
There may not be a single music magazine that has impacted its genre more than *Relix* has impacted jam bands. *Relix: The Book* recounts how and why, encapsulating the magazine's first 30 years and bringing full-circle the world it helped to create.

Relix started in 1974 as a way to connect Grateful Dead fans, becoming a unique music and culture magazine. Today, it remains the only publication of its kind. As *The Book* unfolds, so does the story of one the most colorful bands and subsequent cultures in music history - the Grateful Dead and the Deadheads.

The current jam band evolution was born in the pages of *Relix*. As Phish, Blues Traveler, Gov't Mule, Widespread Panic, Dave Matthews Band. String Cheese Incident, .moe and many others took their places alongside veteran artists like the Grateful Dead, Allman Brothers and Hot Tuna, the music scene grew to encompass not only the classic rock-era baby boomers, but also their children and grandchildren.

In *Relix: The Book - The Grateful Dead Experience*, the genre's long strange trip is told through editorials, interviews, articles, art, comics and photos, with long-time *Relix* owner and publisher Toni Brown weaving the story together with her narrative and recollections.

For more information, or to order *Relix: The Book*, [click here](#).



(BackBeat Books/Hal Leonard Publishing)

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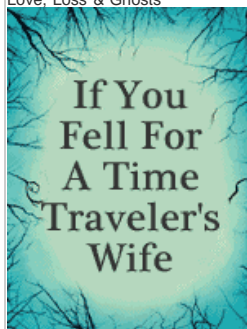
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While it will only be of interest to Deadheads and like-minded folk, *Relix, the Book* is an impressive testament to the devotion and community created by fans of the Grateful Dead. Their relationship with the band, the music, and each other helped create a different business model many new bands now use.

Because of the Grateful Dead's acceptance and encouragement of not-for-profit bootleggers, Les Kippel founded the First Free Underground Grateful Dead Tape Exchange where fans traded concerts. After he was featured in a *Rolling Stone* article entitled "Mr. Tapes of Brooklyn," Kippel was overwhelmed by the demand, so in 1974 he started a newsletter entitled *Dead Relix* featuring news about the band and info about trading bootlegs. Since then, *Relix* has expanded operations. The newsletter is now a magazine with an online presence and there is also a music label.

Compiler Toni Brown went to her first Dead show in 1969, in the late '70s she met Kippel, whom she later married, and worked for the magazine and related businesses. She provides notes of additional information throughout the book.

The newsletter started out with articles and crude drawings. They gained access to the band and other musicians and began running interviews. A 1975 letter from Dick Latvala is featured, who Deadheads will know as the man behind *Dick's Picks*.

Relix covered other bands from the San Francisco scene such as Jefferson Airplane and Dan Hicks and readers didn't seem to mind. In 1978, editor Jerry Moore left and Jeff Tamarkin came in. Tamarkin widened the music covered to artists like Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Ray Vaughn and the Cars. In 1982, Tamarkin moved on and Brown took over.

After back-to-back covers featuring Ozzy Osbourne and Joan Jett, readers revolted and the magazine returned to their roots. I really would have loved to have seen those letters included here and think it was a mistake omitting them.

Continued on the next page

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In 1989, The Grateful Dead went mainstream with their only hit single "Touch of Grey." That same year, Mick Skidmore gave the first review of an unreleased copy of *Junta* by Phish, one of the first bands to succeed following the Dead's business model. There's also a very good article about the burgeoning online experience with Deadheads on bulletin boards.

The magazine also covered the low lights the Deadhead experienced, evident in the article about the thousands who rioted at a show at the Deer Creek Music Center in Noblesville, Indiana, and of course, the devastating loss of Jerry Garcia in 1995. The remaining band members soldiered on with the Furthur Festival and solo projects and the fans followed, although without the same intensity.

Relix, the Book serves as a very good document for those who want to relive their Dead fandom and for those who missed out and want to see "what a long, strange trip" it was.

Page 1 — Page 2

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Relix: The Book – The Grateful Dead Experience

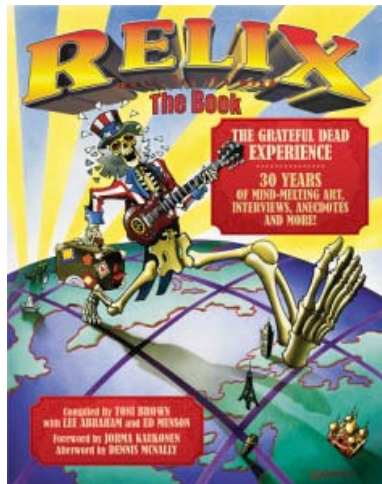
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30 Years of Mind-Melting Art, Interviews, Anecdotes and More!

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[Relix Magazine](#) started in 1974 as a way to connect [Grateful Dead](#) fans, becoming a unique music and culture magazine, the only remaining publication of its kind. Targeting a loyal readership, Relix spans generations.

RELIX: The Book is a collection of material from the first 30 years of the magazine. As the book unfolds, so does the story of the most colorful band and subsequent culture in history—the Grateful Dead and the [Deadheads](#). The long strange trip is told through editorials, interviews, articles, art, comix and photos, with long-time owner and publisher Toni Brown weaving the story together with an informative narrative.

The current Jamband evolution was born in the pages of Relix. As [Phish](#), [Blues Traveler](#), [Gov't Mule](#), [Widespread Panic](#), [Dave Matthews Band](#), [String Cheese Incident](#) and many others took their places alongside veteran artists like the Grateful Dead, [Allman Brothers](#) and [Hot Tuna](#), the music scene grew to

encompass not only the classic rock-era baby boomers, but their children and grandchildren. Today's Jambands number in the thousands, and Deadheads are alive and well, supporting a very active number of Dead tribute bands and ventures featuring members of the Dead. Those fans number in the millions! The festival phenomenon would not exist without the Relix connection.

RELIX: The Book serves to chronicle the early history of this 35-year-old-publication, bringing full-circle the world it helped create.

About The Author

[Toni Brown](#) provided a valid niche for the Grateful Dead during her twenty-plus years as publisher of Relix Magazine, a Deadhead bible and birthplace of the Jamband music scene. From 1979-2001, she supported hundreds of up-and-coming bands, providing the most direct marketplace for musicians to reach their fans.

In 1995, Toni released her debut CD, *Blue Morning*, featuring the David Nelson Band and Hot Tuna's Jorma Kaukonen, Michael Falzarano and Harvey Sorgen. Surrounded by a vast trove of musical talent, Toni made her way into the performance circle, touring internationally. Her second album, *Dare To Dream*, featured The Toni Brown Band, along with Vassar Clements and Flying Burrito Brother John Beland.

Referred to by fans as "Patsy Cline on acid" and the "psychedelic Sheryl Crow," [Toni Brown](#) spent the past fifteen years weaving an ethereal musical tapestry. The Toni Brown Band was a staple on the club and festival circuit for over a decade, and Toni has toured with the Grateful Dead's Tom Constanten, Vince Welnick and Donna Jean, performed with Leftover Salmon's Vince Hermann, used her band to back up Merl Saunders and Vassar Clements, and played with everyone from Phish to Blues Traveler, Hot Tuna, the New Riders of the Purple Sage, Flying Burrito Brothers, John Cipollina, and dozens of other notables from the classic, jam, psychedelic, blues, folk and country rock genres.

Most recently joined by guitarist/songwriter Ed Munson, Toni has completed *State of Mind*, her fourth CD, and is touring in support of *RELIX: The Book—The Grateful Dead Experience*.

Buy [Relix: The Book – Music for the Mind](#) now!

[image: Adrenaline PR]



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Relix The Book: The Grateful Dead Experience

Toni Brown With Lee Abraham & Lee Munson

★★★★★

Backbeat Books, £17.99

ISBN 9780879309865,

244 pages

How the Dead spawned one of America's best music mags



By 1974, the Deadhead phenomenon had mushroomed way beyond the normal band-

fan relationship, as the group famously encouraged taping at its shows. Fervent follower Les Kippel was inspired to start *Dead Relix* in 1974, a kind of *Exchange & Mart* for tape freaks which was an immediate success, then encouraged by Bill Graham as the merchandising side took off too. Over the years, *Relix* grew into one of America's most honestly reliable music publications, untainted by trends and market strategies to still religiously chronicle Dead activities, while later spreading its wings to cover like-minded artists on the west coast and beyond.

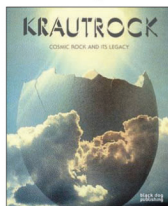
The mag's first 30 years have been boiled down into this lovely collection of past features, interviews, covers, photos and new comments, offering all you need to know about the Dead, along with features on anyone from Jim Morrison to Willie Dixon. Gary Kroman's incredible skeleton illustrations are still one of the most distinctively evocative images in rock, while the section covering Jerry Garcia's passing in 1995 is moving in the extreme, Dylan's heartfelt tribute as eloquent as his best lyrics. Few magazines start with a mission and see it through, but *Relix* never strayed from its golden road to unlimited devotion. Here's the 100 per cent proof. *Kris Needs*

KRAUTROCK: COSMIC ROCK AND ITS LEGACY

Edited by Nikolaos Kotsopoulos

Black Dog

www.blackdogonline.com



My panting, undying love affair with Krautrock began in 1974 when, as a relatively unorthodox and pitifully wan 13-year-old, I borrowed a copy of Can's exceptional *Tago*

Mago double album from Greenock's surprisingly catholic record library.

I was intrigued and ultimately ensnared by the inscrutability: the fact that neither the band nor album names gave any kind of clue as to the nature of the music contained within that peculiar flip-top sleeve, with its cover shot of the backs of Damo Suzuki and Jaki Liebezeit. A helpful sleeve note invoked The Velvet Underground by way of comparison and suggested that Can were an altogether scarier prospect, and I can remember thinking: that'll do me.

Krautrock: Cosmic Rock And Its Legacy is the definitive overview so many of us have been waiting for: a detailed salute to main players and minor characters alike, but also a scholarly labour of love which amply supplies the intellectual rigour the topic demands – equal parts historical back story and universe-sized bigger picture.

So, preceding the thoughtful profiles you would rightly expect of Can, Kraftwerk, NEU!, Faust, Tangerine Dream, Amon Düül II, Popol Vuh, Cluster, Harmonia and less-celebrated worthies such as Floh De Cologne, Agitation Free, Guru Guru and Xhol Caravan, you will find illustrative and revelatory essays from Ken Hollings, Erik Davis, David Stubbs and Michael Faber, each as brimming with fresh ideas and associations as the music itself.

Add to this informed studies of the key record labels and producers – and a voraciously plundered photographic archive which brings the whole venture to swarming life – one comes away with a renewed understanding of the fact that many of these extraordinary bands had little or nothing in common, but remain united in our collective consciousness as much by their indefinable otherness as their birthright.

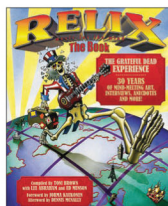
A fantastic, unimpeachable piece of work. **Marco Rossi**

RELIX THE BOOK: THE GRATEFUL DEAD EXPERIENCE

Edited by Lee Abraham, Toni Brown and Ed Munson

Backbeat

www.backbeatbooks.com



When it comes to recorded evidence and memorabilia relating to their heroes, Deadheads always had it remarkably sussed. While other groups got in a panic about bootlegs harming their precious sales, the Dead acknowledged that none of their gigs were ever the same and that the fans who braved many hardships to travel many miles to witness them were entitled to some respect, plus a limitless amount of fodder to satisfy their constant craving. To this end, special areas were set aside at

gigs so the fans could tape shows, there was always merchandise carrying the familiar skull-and-roses logo and eventually, in 1974, the logical step of a magazine devoted to Dead activities. *Dead Relix* was started by Les Kippel as "a tape exchange in my head somewhere between Dark Star and St Stephen", the first photocopied issue flying off the shelves.

Before long, Les and crew were faced with the usual problems besetting such ventures and expanded a merchandise arm, which was taken under the wing of Bill Graham's Winterland Productions. Like the best ventures, it was never planned as a money-making business project, but grew over the years to become one of the most respected magazines in the US, up there with *Bomp!* and *Trouser Press*.

Unlike many magazines it managed to hang on to its passion, original ethic and simply expand healthily, continuing to cover the Dead but going on to include stellar contemporaries like Commander Cody, Hot Tuna, Quicksilver Messenger Service and other West Coast giants without being raped and pillaged by clueless money men.

Long-time driving force Toni Brown, plus staffers Lee Abraham and Ed Munson, have compiled a wonderful compendium of past highlights which, experienced as a whole, present a spectacularly eye-blasting feast of past artwork (including some beltlers from Gary Kroman), features and photos, not only chronicling Dead-related activities but extending to other artists like The Doors, Zappa, Dylan, Stones, Allman Brothers and Willie Dixon.

Obviously, Jerry Garcia's tragic death in '95 came as a shocking watermark, the magazine digging in its heels to fly the skull flag even higher.

Unsurprisingly, *Relix* got new publishers earlier this decade but is still going. A classic, shining example of how magazines can become so much more than just a "big name on the cover" PR-dictated shell and beautifully reinforce people's lives.

This mind-blowing book does it more than proud and Shindiggers may spontaneously ejaculate.

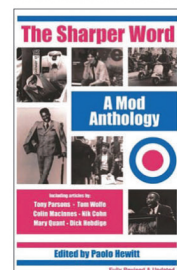
Kris Needs

THE SHARPER WORD: A MOD ANTHOLOGY

Edited by Paolo Hewitt

Helter Skelter Publishing

www.helterskelterpublishing.com



First published in 1999 and now back on the racks as a new improved edition to mark the occasion of its 10th anniversary, *The Sharper Word* offers an unsurpassed insight into the movement variously described as "John

Lee Hooker, amphetamine and Jean Paul Sartre" and "clean living under difficult circumstances".

The Sharper Word remains the first in-depth study of the mod phenomenon and the first book to treat this fascinating and misunderstood chapter in the history of British pop culture with the affection and gravitas it deserves.

All aspects of the history and evolution of mod culture are explored here from the sharp threads, the sounds, the pills, the hippest hang outs and, of course, the Vespas and Lambrettas to the single-minded pursuit of style at all costs

The SIXTIES

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▼ 2009 (2672)

▼ December (167)

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 The resurgence of Rudolph Wurlitzer
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 A Grateful Dead Shabbat
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Saturday, December 5, 2009

[Relix, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience](#)

Book Review:

Relix, the Book: The Grateful Dead Experience Compiled by Toni Brown

<http://blogcritics.org/books/article/book-review-relix-the-book-the/>

Author: El Bicho

Nov 26, 2009

While it will only be of interest to Deadheads and like-minded folk, Relix, the Book is an impressive testament to the devotion and community created by fans of the Grateful Dead. Their relationship with the band, the music, and each other helped create a different business model many new bands now use.

Because of the Grateful Dead's acceptance and encouragement of not-for-profit bootleggers, Les Kippel founded the First Free Underground Grateful Dead Tape Exchange where fans traded concerts. After he was featured in a Rolling Stone article entitled "Mr. Tapes of Brooklyn," Kippel was overwhelmed by the demand, so in 1974 he started a newsletter entitled Dead Relix featuring news about the band and info about trading bootlegs. Since then, Relix has expanded operations. The newsletter is now a magazine with an online presence and there is also a music label.

Compiler Toni Brown went to her first Dead show in 1969, in the late '70s she met Kippel, whom she later married, and worked for the magazine and related businesses. She provides notes of additional information throughout the book.

The newsletter started out with articles and crude drawings. They gained access to the band and other musicians and began running interviews. A 1975 letter from Dick Latvala is featured, who Deadheads will know as the man behind Dick's Picks.

Relix covered other bands from the San Francisco scene such as Jefferson Airplane and Dan Hicks and readers didn't seem to mind. In 1978, editor Jerry Moore left and Jeff Tamarkin came in. Tamarkin widened the music covered to artists like Bruce Springsteen, Stevie Ray Vaughn and the Cars. In 1982, Tamarkin moved on and Brown took over.


After back-to-back covers featuring Ozzy Osbourne and Joan Jett, readers revolted and the magazine returned to their roots. I really would have loved to have seen those letters included here and think it was a mistake omitting them.

In 1989, The Grateful Dead went mainstream with their only hit single "Touch of Grey." That same year, Mick Skidmore gave the first review of an unreleased copy of Junta by Phish, one of the first bands to succeed following the Dead's business model. There's also a very good article about the burgeoning online experience with Deadheads on bulletin boards.

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The Best Beatle
Case Closed on "Hippie Mafia" Smugglers
UC protesters invoke Free Speech
Movement

The magazine also covered the low lights the Deadhead experienced ,evident in the article about the thousands who rioted at a show at the Deer Creek Music Center in Noblesville, Indiana, and of course, the devastating loss of Jerry Garcia in 1995. The remaining band members soldiered on with the Furthur Festival and solo projects and the fans followed, although without the same intensity.

Relix, the Book serves as a very good document for those who want to relive their Dead fandom and for those who missed out and want to see "what a long, strange trip" it was.

Posted by the radman at 1:16 PM 

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RELIX - The Book Compiled by Toni Brown with Lee Abraham

reviewed by Hammond Guthrie

ISBN-10: 0879309865

ISBN-13: 978-0879309862

Jamming with Relix The Book

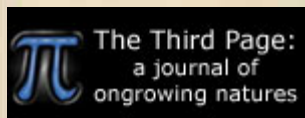


I first experienced what would eventually be called "Jam Band" music when I attended one of Ken Kesey's Acid Tests in 1965. In order to get into the place you had to first walk literally through the Acid Test band then playing a warped rendition of Wilson Pickett's "Midnight Hour." The first person I locked eyes with was Jerry Garcia, lead guitarist of the then nascent Grateful Dead [nee: The Warlocks], who went right on playing "Midnight Hour" for the next two and half hours! Later I would listen to this same band of misfits hammering away at an electrified "Viola Lee Blues" from a truck bed in Panhandle Park in the Haight Ashbury district, yet rather oddly, I did not then, nor do I now, think of myself as a actual "Deadhead." To me

the Dead were the City's "house band," infinitely reliable and creative. Reliable in the sense that you could count on them to be an hour or two late to the gig, and then spend the next 20-30 min. tuning their guitars onstage before launching into (e.g.) a mind-blowing sixty minute version of their improvisational epic "Cryptical Envelopment." If I was any sort of "head" musically in those days I usually turned to the Quicksilver Messenger Service when it came to getting a good dose of psychedelic music. John Cipollina and the QMS took the early stages of the "extended jam," and their enraptured fans to aural spaces even a good dose of LSD couldn't reach.

In those days I was an aspiring writer and artist living in the City, a bit of a rouser at times, and when the bumper stickers began screaming that I should "Love It [the USA] Or Leave It!" I bought a one way ticket to London and split for the greater unknown. When finally I returned some nine years later the Vietnam war was over, Jimmy Carter was in the White House and to my great surprise there was a glossy magazine on the racks devoted to the bands and the music that had created the essential if not cellular sound track for my younger life. Needless to say I became a devoted fan of RELIX magazine, which I would later learn was initially founded when Les Kippel started it in 1974 as a communication tool for tapers. The interviews alone (Robert Hunter, Ned

copacetic sites



Lagin, Dan Healy, Tom Constanten and of course, the Dead), were priceless gems of insight and nostalgia regarding how this music was being created, and equally so if not more importantly, how it was being recorded. The evolution of recording techniques as well as the music itself had moved light years from where it had been just nine years prior, and I was fascinated, if not enlightened by what I found in the pages of RELIX.

As fascinated and intrigued as you may well be reading "RELIX The Book," Toni Brown and Lee Abraham's exceptional collection of in depth interviews, insightful articles (highlights include: "R. Crumb," "Willie Dixon - Blues Giant," and "The Beat Road Never Ends" regarding Neal Cassady, hero of Kerouac's "On The Road" and one of the most original Pranksters), along with engaging photographs and letters documenting and finally representing this wonderfully experimental time in the history of rock and roll.

"RELIX - The Book" is a wonderful addition to any collection.

Buy the Book!

Signed copies are available at www.tonibrownband.com, [\$29.99 + \$4.95 shipping]. Includes a FREE copy of the CD, "State Of Mind" from the Toni Brown Band.

You can also buy the book at a discount at Amazon.com.



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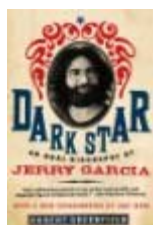


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About Hammond Guthrie

Hammond Guthrie is the author of "AsEverWas..Memoirs of a Beat Survivor" and archivist for The 3rd Page: A Journal of Ongrowing Natures.



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