

Grateful Dead – The Grateful Dead (1971)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Bertha* (Garcia, Hunter) - 5:40
 02. *Mama Tried* (Merle Haggard) - 2:41
 03. *Big Railroad Blues* (Noah Lewis) - 3:33
 04. *Playing In The Band* (Hart, Hunter, Weir) - 4:38
 05. *The Other One* (Kreutzmann, Weir) - 18:03
 06. *Me & My Uncle* (John Phillips) - 3:02
 07. *Big Boss Man* (Smith, Dixon) - 5:08
 08. *Me & Bobby McGee* (Kristofferson, Foster) - 3:02
 09. *Johnny B. Goode* (Chuck Berry) - 3:41
 10. *Wharf Rat* (Garcia, Hunter) - 8:30
 11. *Not Fade Away* (Hardin, Petty)/*Goin' Down The Road Feeling Bad* (Traditional) - 9:12
- Bonuses:
12. *Oh, Boy!* (live) - 2:50
 13. *I'm A Hog For You* (live) (Leiber/Stoller) - 4:06

Personnel:

- Jerry Garcia - lead guitar, vocals
- Bob Weir - rhythm guitar, vocals
- Phil Lesh - bass guitar, vocals
- Bill Kreutzmann - drums
- Ron Pigpen McKernan - organ, harmonica, vocals
- +
- Merl Saunders – organ

The Grateful Dead's second live release was an eponymously titled double LP whose cover bears the striking skull-and-roses visual motif that would become instantly recognizable and an indelibly linked trademark of the band. As opposed to their debut concert recording, *Live/Dead* (1969), this hour and ten minutes concentrates on newer material, which consisted of shorter

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self-contained originals and covers. Coming off of the quantum-leap success of the studio country-rock efforts Workingman's Dead (1969) and American Beauty, Grateful Dead offers up a pair of new Jerry Garcia/Robert Hunter compositions -- "Bertha" and "Wharf Rat" -- both of which garnered a permanent place within the band's live catalog. However, "The Other One" -- joined in progress just as Billy Kreutzmann fires up a blazing percussion solo -- sprawls as the album's centerpiece. The Dead also begin incorporating several traditional folk, blues, and R&B cover tunes, such as Merle Haggard's "Mama Tried," Kris Kristofferson's "Me & Bobby McGee," as well as a few that had been in their songbook for several years, including John Phillips' "Me & My Uncle" and "Big Boss Man," a blues standard popularized by Jimmy Reed. Their formidable improvisational chops have begun to take on new facets of lean intricacy as Mickey Hart (percussion) and Tom Constanten (keyboards) were no longer in the band. Additionally, the arrival of Keith Godchaux (organ) and his wife, Donna Godchaux (vocals), had yet to occur. As such, the Grateful Dead spent the spring and summer of 1971 in their original five-piece configuration -- which is when these recordings were documented. The Golden Road (1965-1973) (2001) box set features a remastered version of Grateful Dead and includes two additional covers -- Buddy Holly's "Oh, Boy!" as well as Leiber & Stoller's "(I'm A) Hog for You" -- plus an unmarked vintage radio spot for the album. Enthusiasts should note that this era is likewise represented on the four-CD Ladies and Gentlemen...The Grateful Dead (2000) archival release. ---Lindsay Planer, AllMusic Review

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