

## **A Message from Bob Bralove**

Dear Friends,

I am still in shock over the loss of our friend Vince. With the rest of my life moving in high gear and the recent feeling that every time I stand up something knocks me down, it has taken some time to absorb the reality of his passing. Now that the tears are beginning to stop I am moved to share some reflections of my friend whose' absence is felt every day.

I first met Vince when he auditioned for the keyboard position for the Grateful Dead. As Brent's technical support it was down to me to help the auditioners plug into the existing scene. Some of them brought their own keyboards others didn't. Vince played Brent's old rig and so asked me to provide the sounds for different songs. He got the gig and continued to ask me to provide him with sonic options for different songs. As Vince worked his magic with the Grateful Dead our channels of communications continued to expand and we found ourselves writing songs together. I remember one morning when the Grateful Dead was playing Cal Expo, Vince and I spent hours, in my hotel room before the show dubbing down a rough cassette of our first song for Robert Hunter.. Hunter added his genius and "Way to go Home" was born. Vince was generous enough to spend some of his off time from the GD as a member of my band Second Sight and every time he played with us the energy expanded. When he was looking for songs for "Missing Man Formation" Vince, Barlow, and I got together for "The Devil I Know".

In the last few years Vince and I had become even closer friends than we were before. Recently we had been working on several musical projects together including the Psychedelic Keyboard Trio (Tom Constanten, Vince and myself), a CD and performances of the Trio with orchestra. Vince and I were also in the middle of two dozen new songs in various stages of completion. He approached every project we did together with the utmost clarity, openness and professionalism always looking for his contribution to resonate with a larger intent. Knowing he was on a project gave me freedom. The freedom to take chances and go for the gold. He was there and knew how to help you go just a little bit further.

Writing songs with him was a joy. We would start with what Vince would call a "dumb shit" groove. "You know, kick and snare 'dumb shit, dumb shit, dumb shit, dumb shit". We would pick a tempo and begin recording. We would jam and jam, double keyboards, trying new things out until we both looked up and said, "That was it". At which point we would immediately go to vocals. Tracking to the jam we had just performed. Starting with syllables and melodies songs would evolve. First single words suggested by the music, then phrases and eventually verses and choruses. It was true fun. I felt I could grab for any emotion or thought and when Vince shined his light on it, its powers would be revealed. When I worked with him he offered total artistic support. And when he carried the torch it was bright.

When he delivered full Vince Welnick in performance the energy in the room changed. He was able to emit a golden love vibe wrapped up in a party. Any one lucky enough to have seen him light up a room in a live performance saw a great Rock and Roll show. I consider it a great privilege to have shared the stage with him in every configuration in which we worked together. He was a constant inspiration to me and I will miss him more than I can say. It is the love that he was able to express that we must remember and try to keep shining. Take it home and spread it around in his honor.

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