

BAND OF GYPSYS

HENDRIX



72434-93446-2-4



1. WHO KNOWS (J. Hendrix-9:32)
2. MACHINE GUN (J. Hendrix-12:33)
3. CHANGES (B. Miles-5:10)
4. POWER TO LOVE (J. Hendrix-6:53)
5. MESSAGE TO LOVE (J. Hendrix-5:22)
6. WE GOTTA LIVE TOGETHER (B. Miles-5:46)

RECORDED LIVE-NEW YEAR'S EVE 69-70
AT FILLMORE EAST IN NEW YORK

Produced by Heaven Research
Recorded live by Wally Heider
Remixing & Engineering Supervision by Eddie Kramer

All songs written by Jimi Hendrix and published by Experience Hendrix, L.L.C. (ASCAP)
except #3, 6 written by Buddy Miles and published by Miles Ahead Music Inc. (ASCAP)
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Nearly three decades after his untimely death in September 1970, *Band Of Gypsies* remains one of Jimi Hendrix's most impressive achievements.

A touchstone for blues, funk, fusion, and rock, *Band Of Gypsies* captured Hendrix's quicksilver transition from pop phenomenon to new uncharted territories. While their recorded output centers almost entirely around these fabled Fillmore East live recordings, the depth of the trio's influence extends, with full force, throughout rock and hip-hop of the 1990's.

As influential as *Band Of Gypsies* has become, the circumstances which ultimately led to the album's creation have been routinely misinterpreted, or simply misunderstood. The pairing of Hendrix with bassist Billy Cox and drummer Buddy Miles did not come as a result of 'pressure' from political fringe groups like the Black Panthers, instead, the group resulted from Cox and Miles joining forces to help their friend resolve a bitter legal dispute. The real story behind *Band Of Gypsies* began not in October 1969, but October 1965.

By the summer of 1965, Hendrix had resigned his position in the J.B. Specials, the touring band for the Isley Brothers. Looking for new opportunities to further his own career, Hendrix joined Curtis Knight & the Squires, an R&B group whose enthusiastic live performances of top 40 hits had earned them a modest following throughout New York and New



HENDRIX



Jersey. In September, Knight and Hendrix were introduced to producer Ed Chalpin. Chalpin's company, the New York based PPX Industries, had created a lucrative business by recording cover versions of top US hits for foreign record companies who would then overdub translated lyrics. With an eye on the US singles charts as well, Chalpin signed Knight, Hendrix, and the Squires to exclusive recording contracts. Desperate for a chance to realize his music in a recording studio, Hendrix signed the agreement, failing to inform Chalpin that just three months prior, he had signed a similar agreement with legendary R&B producer Juggy Murray to record for Sue Records, the recording home to such luminaries as Ike & Tina Turner and Baby Washington.

Under Chalpin's direction, Knight & the Squires recorded a number of original songs with the hope of cracking *Billboard's* elusive singles charts. These songs, largely composed by Knight, the group's lead vocalist, were recorded during sessions staged in October and December 1965. Two singles featuring Hendrix with Knight, "How Would You Feel" b/w "Welcome Home" and "Hornet's Nest" b/w "Knock Yourself Out" were issued in early 1966 by RSVP Records, a small, New York independent label. With "Hornet's Nest" and "Knock Yourself Out", Hendrix, listed as Jimmy Hendrix, received his first label credit as co-composer of these two instrumentals. However, apart from some minor regional interest, neither single enjoyed any particular chart impact. Hendrix toured with the Squires, but soon tired of having to perform cover versions of top 40 hits night after night. A few months later, Hendrix left Knight and relocated to Greenwich Village. There, he adopted the stage name Jimmy James and formed his own group, Jimmy James & The Blue Flames, featuring a teenage Randy California—later of Spirit—on second guitar.

It was while performing as Jimmy James that Hendrix was noticed by Animals bassist Chas Chandler. Wanting to retire from the stage to pursue a career in record production, Chandler's first project was to find an artist to record a new interpretation of the song "Hey Joe". Chandler had been impressed with the version Tim Rose had recorded and felt



convinced that he could achieve a hit record in the UK with a remake. Linda Keith, a mutual friend of Hendrix and Chandler's, steered the bassist to the Cafe Wha? to see Jimmy James. Governed by fate, Hendrix began his performance with his own scintillating rendition of "Hey Joe", leaving Chandler dumbfounded.

Immediately after the performance,

Chandler approached Hendrix and offered to take him to England, where he would produce and manage his career. In September 1966, Hendrix traveled with Chandler to London and began his new journey. Under Chandler's skillful supervision, Jimi, leading the newly formed Jimi Hendrix Experience, quickly skyrocketed to international success. Early singles like "Hey Joe" and "Purple Haze", coupled with *Are You Experienced?*, their stunning debut album, firmly established Hendrix's position among rock's elite, where he enjoyed wide praise for both his dramatic stage performances and innovative approach to electric guitar.

Word of Hendrix's remarkable success abroad did not escape Ed Chalpin. Chalpin, whose last contact with Hendrix had come in December 1965, was stunned to read trade magazine reports trumpeting the achievements of the Jimi Hendrix Experience. Unlike Juggy Murray, who had sold Hendrix's July 1965, Sue Records contract to Chas Chandler outright, Chalpin had never been approached. He felt passionately that Hendrix's current status violated his exclusive artist agreement. Determined to reverse the situation in his favor, Chalpin, in the Spring of 1967, initiated a long, bitter legal battle to reclaim Hendrix and the rights to his recordings for his company, PPX Industries.





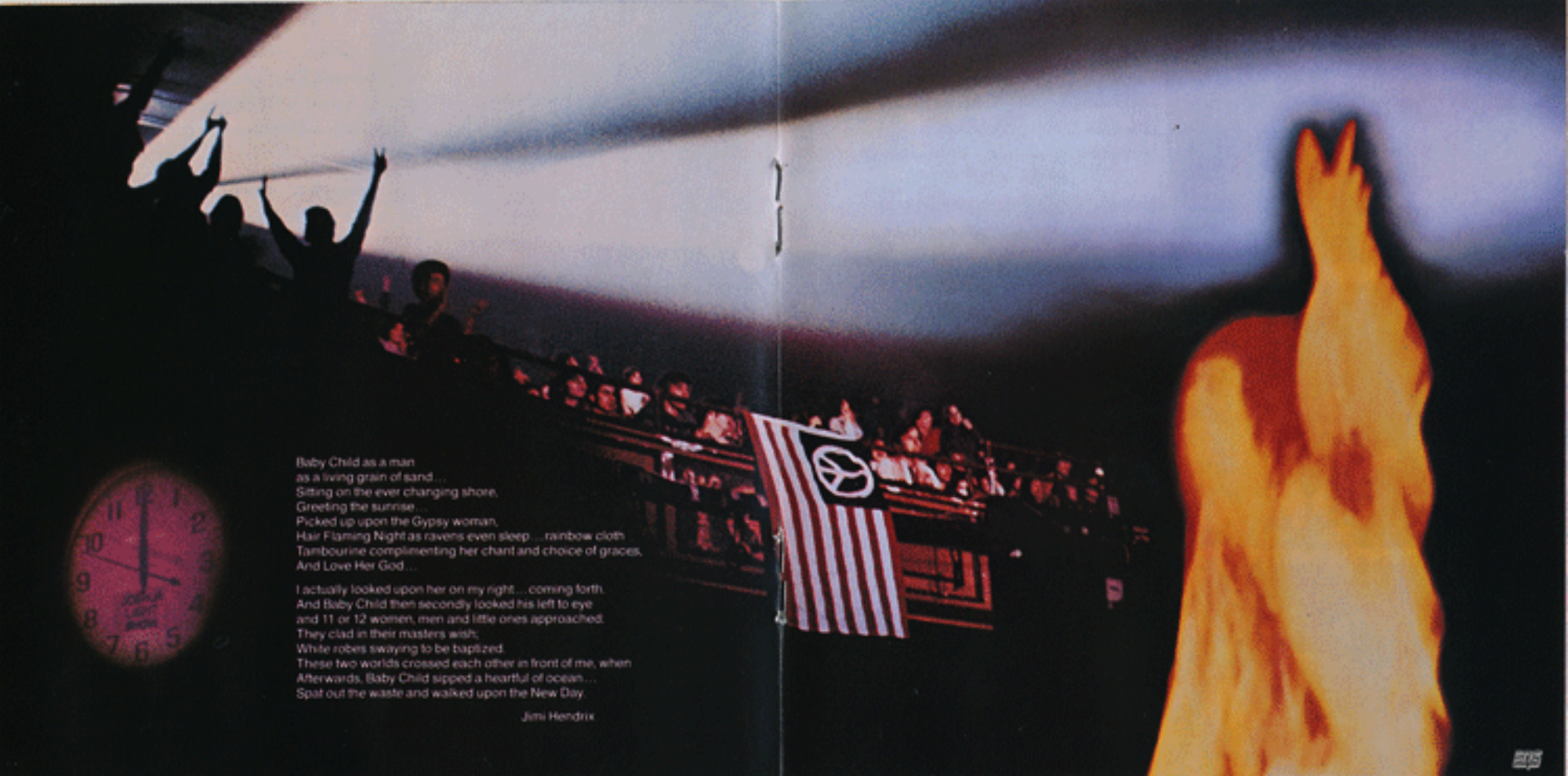
Over the summer, as both sides traded accusations, Hendrix inexplicably volunteered his services to Chalpin and Knight not once, but on two occasions. At sessions staged for Knight & the Squires, Hendrix engaged in jam sessions with his former group and lent bass and guitar parts to their recordings.

The dispute escalated in November 1967, when Chalpin entered into an agreement with Capitol Records to release his recordings of Curtis Knight & the Squires featuring Hendrix on guitar. Selections were culled from the 1965 master tapes, as well as the two 1967 sessions, and released as *Get That Feeling* in December 1967. Hendrix and his two managers, Chandler and Michael Jeffery, were furious, citing Jimi's limited role in the recordings and cover art which seemed to magnify Jimi's overall contribution to the album. As *Get That Feeling* competed for sales with Axis: *Bold As Love*, the Experience's second album for Reprise, Capitol followed with *Flamingo*, a second album compiled from Chalpin's various session tapes.


After months of bitter wrangling between both sides, a settlement which granted Chalpin and Capitol certain financial considerations and the distribution rights to one album featuring performances by the Jimi Hendrix Experience was reached in July 1968. As Hendrix was then currently in the process of completing the two-disc set *Electric Ladyland* for Reprise, Capitol agreed to accept the group's following album as their compensation.

Eager to resolve the issue, Hendrix's manager Michael Jeffery pushed Hendrix to deliver an album as soon as possible. The many months devoted to creating *Electric Ladyland* however, had frayed the relationship of



A photograph of a concert stage. In the foreground, several silhouetted figures are seen from behind, their arms raised in the air. A large American flag with a peace sign in the center is draped across the stage. The background is a bright, hazy light, possibly from stage lights or a large screen. The overall mood is one of celebration and peace.

Baby Child as a man
as a living grain of sand ...
Sitting on the ever changing shore,
Greeting the sunrise ...
Picked up upon the Gypsy woman,
Hair Flaming Night as ravens even sleep ... rainbow cloth
Tambourine complimenting her chant and choice of graces,
And Love Her God ...

A glowing, circular clock face with numbers 1 through 12. The hands are visible, and the overall appearance is ethereal and slightly blurred.

I actually looked upon her on my right ... coming forth,
And Baby Child then secondly looked his left to eye
and 11 or 12 women, men and little ones approached.
They clad in their masters wish;
White robes swaying to be baptized.
These two worlds crossed each other in front of me, when
Afterwards, Baby Child sipped a heartful of ocean ...
Spit out the waste and walked upon the New Day.

Jimi Hendrix

A small, dark logo in the bottom right corner of the page, possibly a publisher's mark.



Hendrix and Chandler. The two clashed over their individual approach to recording. Without Chandler to referee these disputes, Experience sessions were often unproductive, with Jimi increasingly unable to distinguish the quality of his own performances. With little new material in hand, October 1968 sessions for the group's new album were largely unproductive. As

relations between Hendrix and Experience bassist Noel Redding further deteriorated, the group's infrequent efforts at recording as a unit failed to generate even a single, let alone an album of finished masters. Despite the group's popularity, the Experience had fallen victim to the combined weight of their exhaustive schedule of personal appearances.

With the Experience unable to complete an album of studio recordings, concerts in Los Angeles and San Diego were taped for a possible live album. While these recordings were reviewed for release, Jeffery decided against the live album

concept and reiterated his call for the long overdue studio album due Capitol. Crafting a worthy sequel to the superb *Electric Ladyland* however, continued to elude Hendrix. In May, Hendrix was arrested in Toronto on drug charges. The arrest darkened Jimi's mood and created a growing anxiety which served to dampen his creative spirit. Already beset by the turmoil and embarrassment created by the Toronto bust, the Experience disbanded shortly after an appearance in Denver in June 1969. Over the weeks which followed, Hendrix replaced Redding with his old Army buddy Billy Cox. Experiments with a big band, filled out with extra percussion elements and second guitar, were staged at the guitarist's rented summer retreat in Shokan, New York. This ensemble, labelled by Hendrix as Gypsy, Sun & Rainbows, would headline the Woodstock Festival in August 1969.

Unable to realize the sounds he had hoped the enlarged band could provide him, the loose-knit Gypsy Sun & Rainbows disbanded in late September. Under increasing pressure to deliver an album to Capitol, Hendrix was without a band and unsure of his future direction. Recognizing that Hendrix had to complete this long overdue album in order that his career could resume, Billy Cox and Buddy Miles pushed Jimi to create a new group so that this could be accomplished.

An agreement with promoter Bill Graham was reached with the new group promising to perform two shows each night on December 31, 1969 and January 1, 1970. While the Experience had sold out Madison Square Garden just nine months before, Hendrix opted for a smaller, more intimate venue for his new group. Plans were made to record all four performances. There was even a clause which released Jimi from this commitment should he be convicted at his December drug trial in Toronto. Fortunately, Hendrix was quickly acquitted of all charges, clearing an enormous weight from his shoulders.

To prepare for the Fillmore East concerts, the group dedicated long hours to rehearsals staged at Baggy's Studios, a lower Manhattan converted warehouse operated by former Soft Machine roadie Tom Edmonston. Here, without the pressure and expense of



developing new material in top studios such as the Record Plant, the Band Of Gypsys, as Hendrix had named them, routinized such exciting new Hendrix originals as "Message To Love," "Earth Blues," and "Burning Desire."

Hendrix's new songs made clear the emerging shift in his musical direction. The titles alone—"Message To Love," "Power Of Soul," "Earth Blues," "Burning Desire"—suggest a change in theme. Jimi's playful humor, an essential asset of such Experience classics as "Crosstown Traffic" and "Rainy Day, Dream Away" had been replaced with a strident sense of self-examination. In addition, Cox and Miles spurred Jimi's embrace of the R&B tradition they shared. Through inspired works such as "Power Of Soul" and "Ezy Ryder," the trio merged rock and funk with unparalleled ease.

To celebrate the beginning of the new decade, Fillmore East impresario Bill Graham went to great lengths to ensure a special evening for his patrons, dressing his ushers in special shirts and placing toy tambourines on each of the venue's 2,639 seats. The Band Of Gypsys responded in kind, as Hendrix was spectacular throughout the four shows. Risking rejection and the unwelcome prospect of having to field requests for "Wild Thing" and "All Along The Watchtower," Jimi boldly premiered the group's new material at will, freely interspersing "Izabella" and "Stepping Stone" with Experience standards like "Fare" and "Voodoo Child (Slight Return)."

Despite the dramatic success of their four sold-out performances, no other engagements—save for an aborted appearance at Sid Bernstein's Winter Festival For Peace at Madison Square Garden on January 28, 1970—were ever scheduled. With the tapes of the Fillmore East performances now in hand, Hendrix's manager Michael Jeffery wanted the guitarist to reform the Jimi Hendrix Experience and resume touring. Jeffery needed Hendrix to tour so

that the construction of Electric Lady Studios, the Greenwich Village recording facility in which they were equal partners, would remain solvent. Hendrix balked at the suggestion and the two clashed violently during the days leading up to the Madison Square Garden performance. The resulting tension badly impacted Hendrix, forcing him from the stage after trudging through just two numbers. Backstage, amid the chaos and confusion, Jeffery fired Buddy Miles and the Band Of Gypsies were no more.

Prior to the Madison Square Garden debacle, Hendrix and engineer Eddie Kramer reviewed the master tapes from the four performances and prepared the *Band Of Gypsies* album. Ironically, production for the album was conducted at Juggy Sound Studios, formerly the recording headquarters for Juggy Murray's Sue Records. Drawn from the group's two performances on January 1, "Power Of Soul" and "Message To Love" were two of Jimi's most promising new compositions, while "Machine Gun," the album's centerpiece, remains one of the guitarist's supreme achievements.

Despite an abundance of rousing performances to choose from, a number of songs were declared off limits to the album by Jimi. According to Eddie Kramer,





Hendrix wanted to wait until Electric Lady Studios opened so that he could finish the definitive versions of songs such as "Izabella" and "Ezy Ryder." Seeking to be equitable, Hendrix wanted the album to feature two songs by Buddy Miles, ultimately choosing "Changes," one of Miles' most celebrated compositions, and "We Gotta Live Together," whose grand, final crescendo had brought the second January 1 show to a pre-encore close, hence its positioning as the album's final track.

Upon its release in April 1970, *Band Of Gypsies* promptly earned the guitarist his fifth consecutive *Billboard* top ten album. Second only in sales to *Are You Experienced* prior to his death, the album peaked at number five and remained popular throughout the summer. Despite the album's exceptional sales performance, however, Hendrix never lived to see a royalty check from the disc that had so complicated his life and career. His death in September 1970 robbed popular music of one of its brightest innovators.

Statistics such as sales figures, however, do little to accurately measure the lasting impact *Band Of Gypsies* has made on rock, funk, R&B, and Hip-Hop. As the last album Jimi personally authorized, *Band Of Gypsies* has not just endured, its legacy has flourished, with its broad appeal and powerful music continuing to inspire new generations.

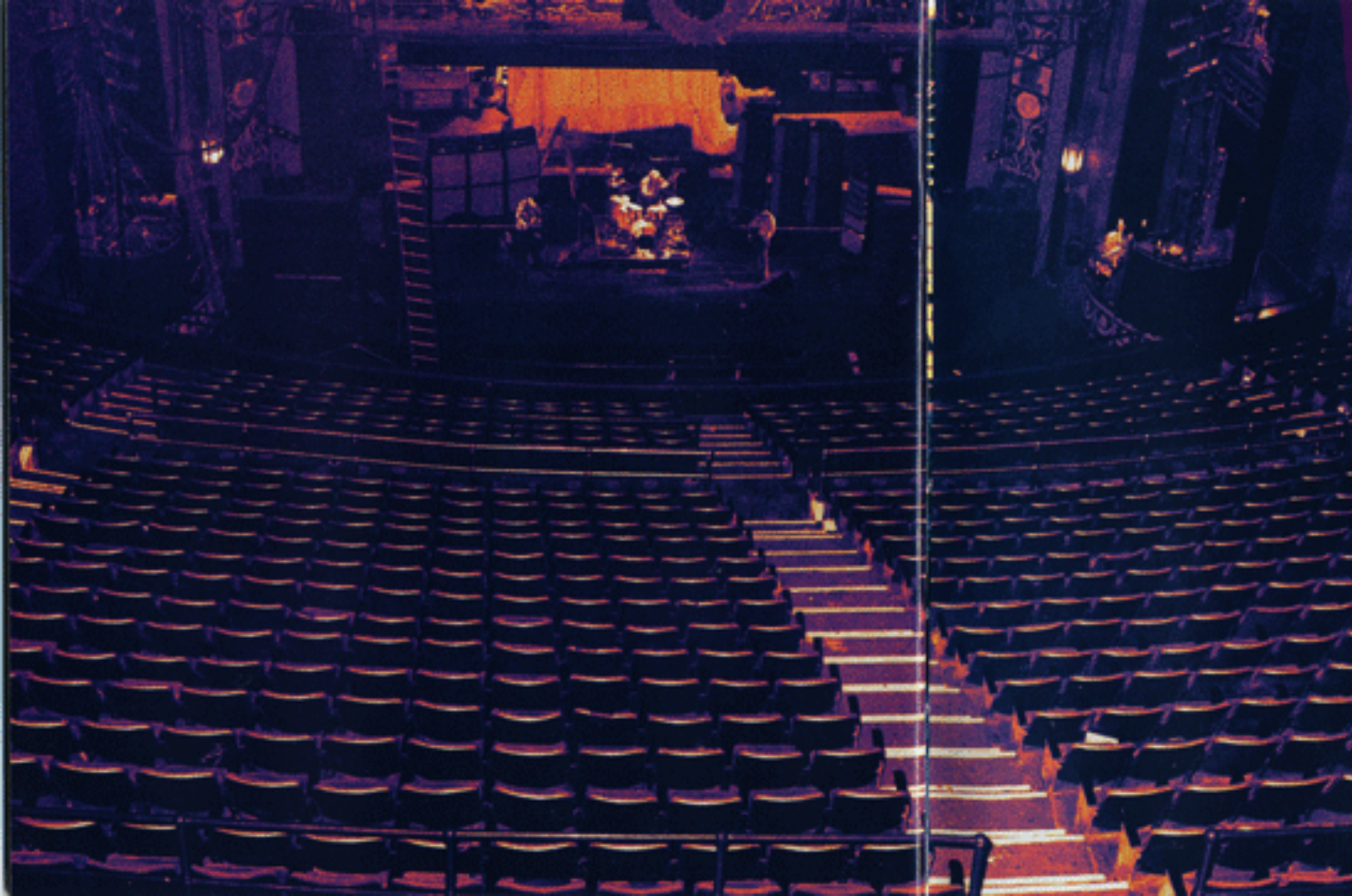
JIMI HENDRIX: A BAND OF GYPSYS

John McDermott

JIMI HENDRIX BUDDY MILES BELLY COE

and

The VOICES
OF EAST HARLEM



RECORDED LIVE-NEW YEAR'S EVE 69-70
AT FILLMORE EAST IN NEW YORK

Produced by Heaven Research

Recorded live by Wally Heider

Remixing & Engineering Supervision by Eddie Kramer

Background by Joshua Light Show

Photographed by Jan Blom

Designed by Victor Kahn

Mixed at Juggy Sound Studios, N.Y.

by Jimi Hendrix & Eddie Kramer

January 14, 15, 16, 19, 21

February 2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 17, 1970

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Sterling Sound, N.Y.

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Pinnacle Artists (pg. 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 14, 18, 19, 22-23),

Joe Sia (pg. 5, 6-7, 10, 16, 20), Jan Blom (pg. 12-13)

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