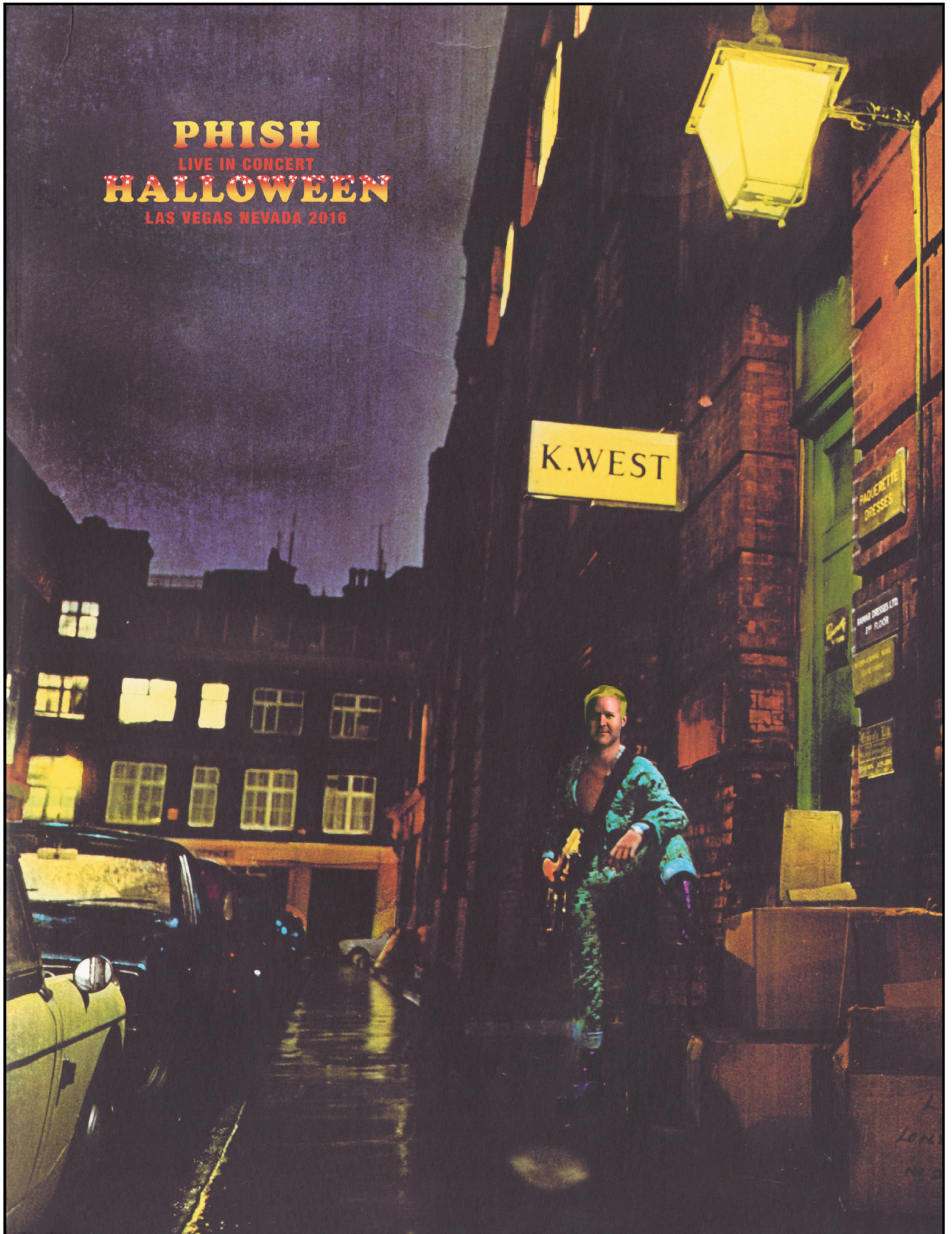


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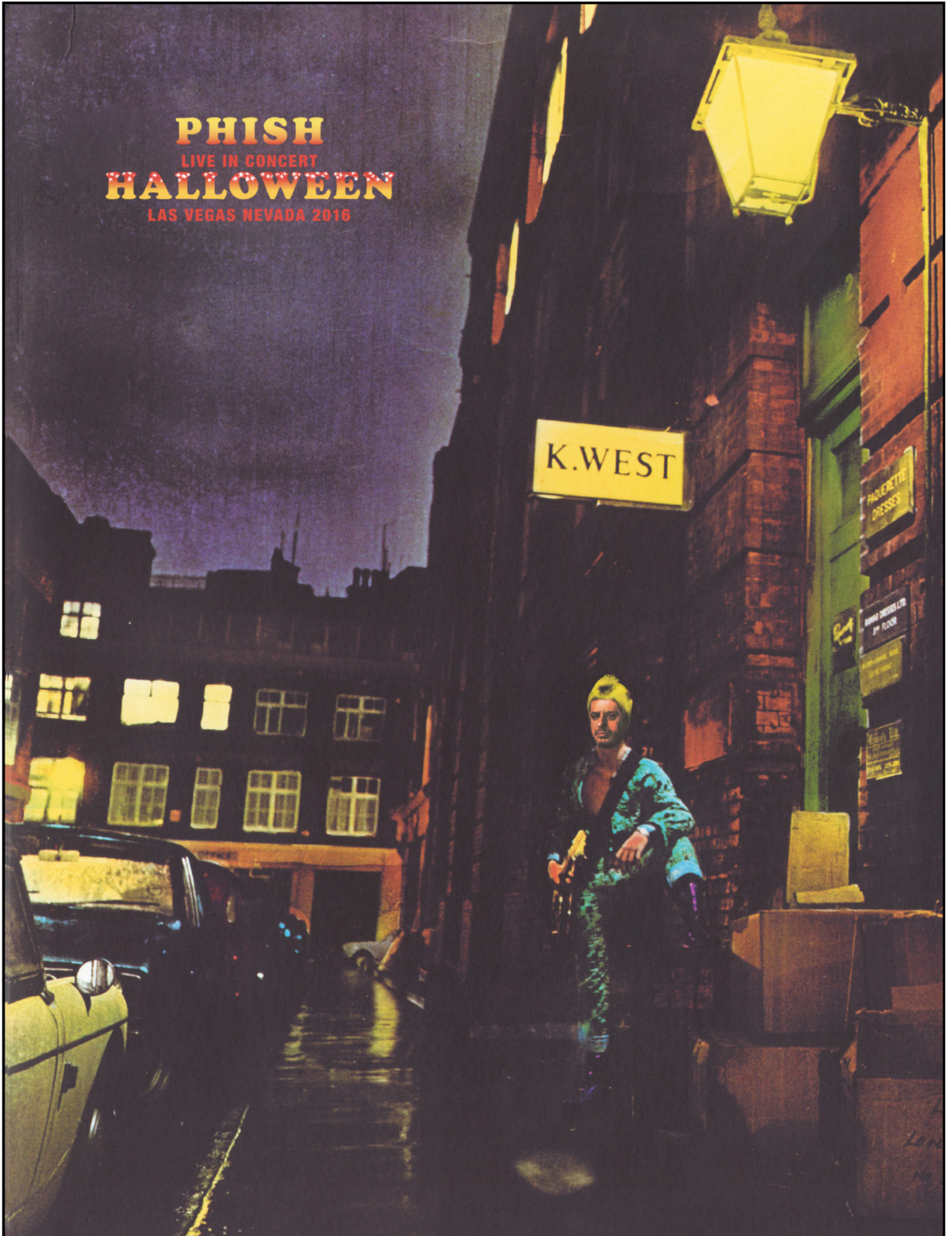
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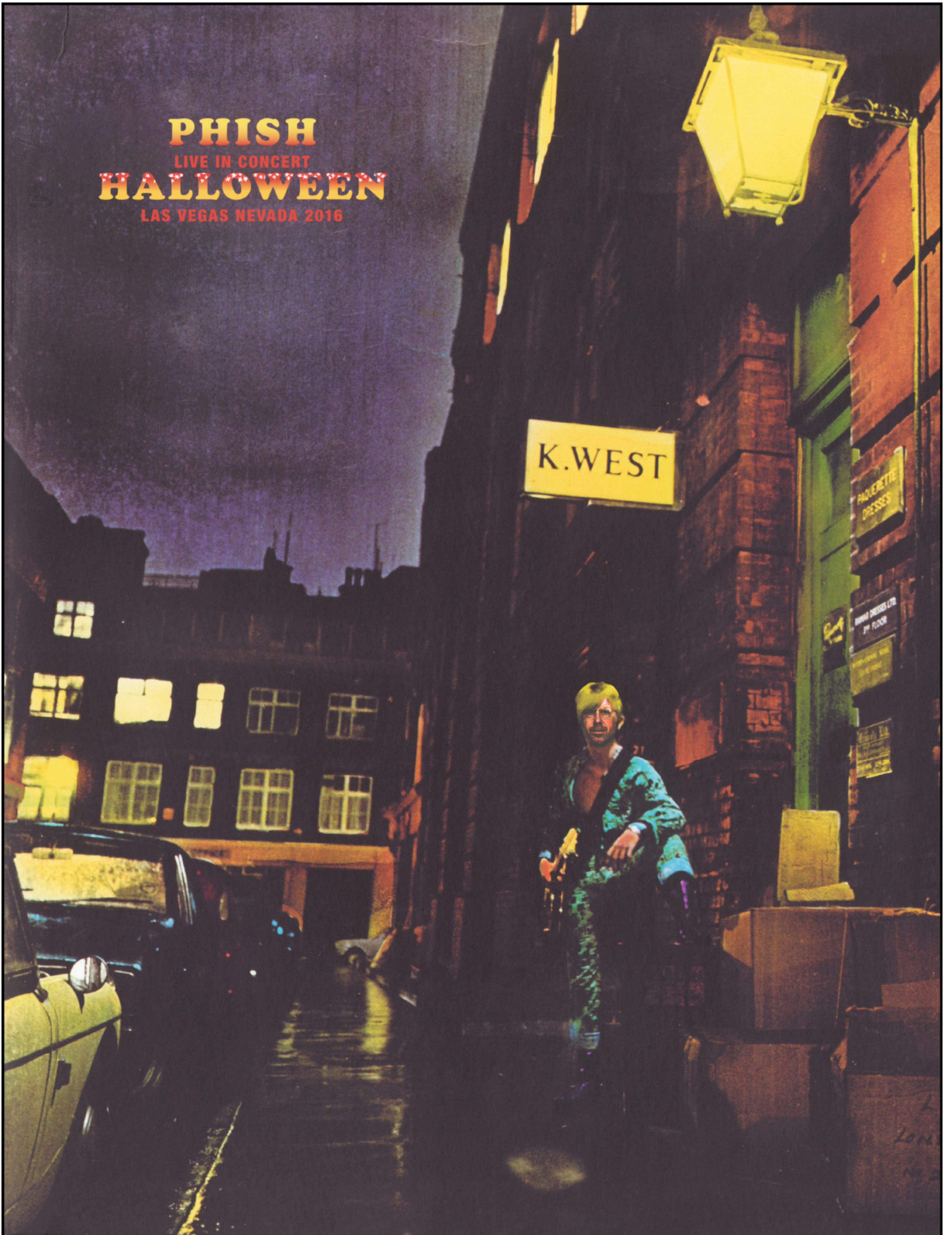
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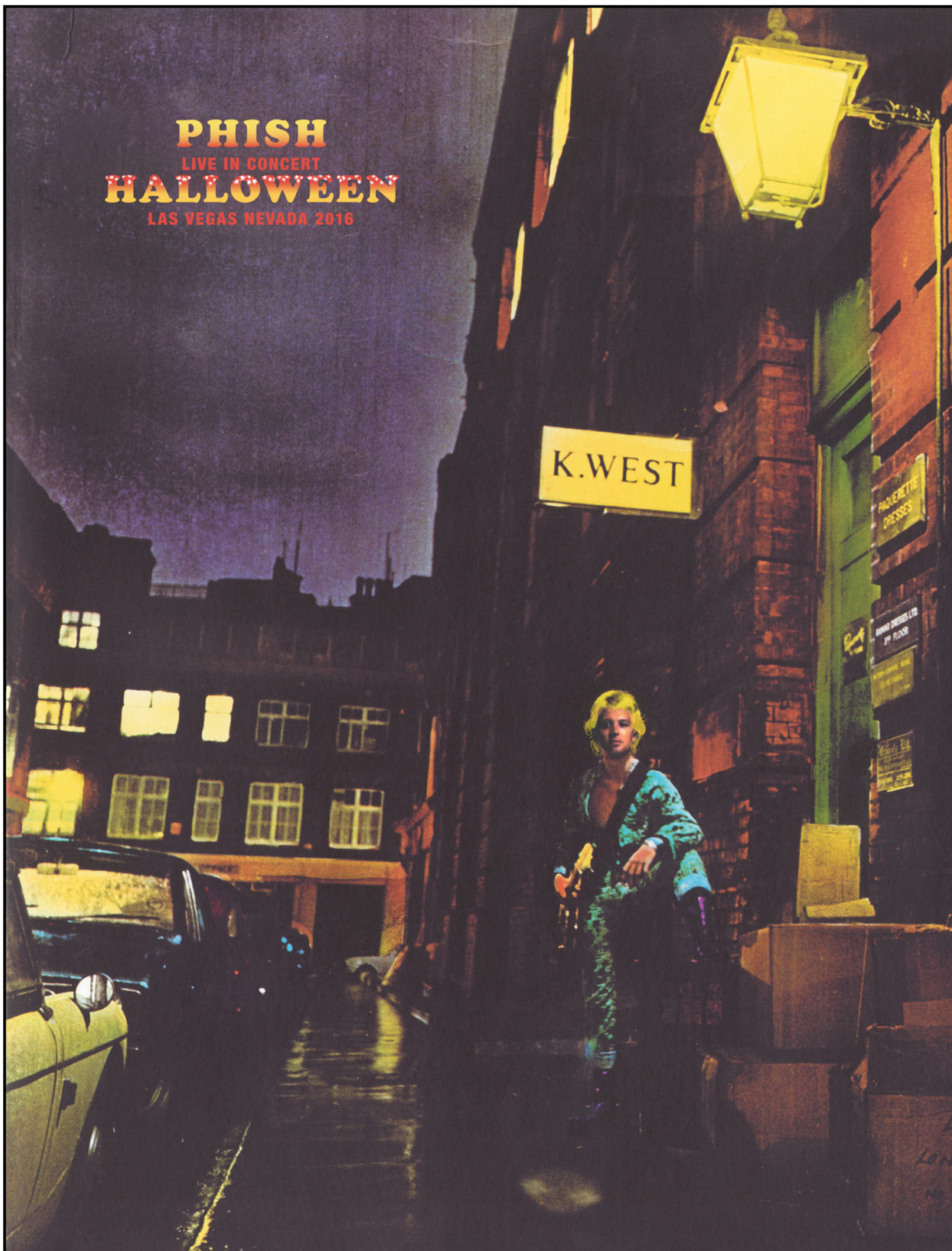
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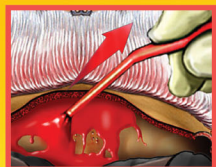
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PRESENTING

PHISH

in

DAVID BOWIE
THE RISE AND FALL OF
ZIGGY STARDUST
AND THE SPIDERS FROM MARS

with

TREY ANASTASIO JON FISHMAN
MIKE GORDON PAGE MCCONNELL

and

SYLVIA D'AVANZO JENNIFER HARTSWICK
CELISSA HENDERSON ALISA HORN
JO LAMPERT TODD LOW
ANTOINE SILVERMAN ALISSA SMITH
HIROKO TAGUCHI

VOCAL AND STRING ARRANGEMENTS BY

CARMEL DEAN

PROGRAM ORDER

Set One: PHISH

**Set Two: THE RISE AND FALL OF ZIGGY STARDUST
AND THE SPIDERS FROM MARS**

1. FIVE YEARS
2. SOUL LOVE
3. MOONAGE DAYDREAM
4. STARMAN
5. IT AIN'T EASY
6. LADY STARDUST
7. STAR
8. HANG ON TO YOURSELF
9. ZIGGY STARDUST
10. SUFFRAGETTE CITY
11. ROCK 'N' ROLL SUICIDE

Set Three: PHISH

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YOU ARE READING A *Schibice* PUBLICATION

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By David Fricke

OH NO, LOVE! YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

On June 24th, the second stop of Phish's 2016 summer tour, Trey Anastasio, Mike Gordon, Page McConnell and Jon Fishman walked on to the stage at Chicago's Wrigley Field for their encores. The big finish was an oldie but goodie, "Run Like an Antelope." The first number was a live premiere of deep thank-you and goodbye. Standing around a microphone tree, Phish sang a robust a capella version of a classic British hymn in memory of its composer: David Bowie's 1969 ballad of adventure, solitude and sacrifice "Space Oddity."

Tonight in Las Vegas, Phish celebrate Halloween in their usual manner and continue to honor Bowie – who died on January 10th, 2016, two days after his 69th birthday – with a complete performance of the London-born singer's galactic-glam masterpiece, *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars*. "Once we did 'Space Oddity,'" Anastasio says, "it was a conversation we had pretty quickly. 'Oh, Halloween is coming up. Let's do *Ziggy Stardust*."

Released on June 6th, 1972, Bowie's fifth studio album was the portrait – in eleven songs of snarling-guitar futurism, gleaming vocal melodrama and perfect-pop design – of a fictional rock god: the brilliant, doomed *Ziggy Stardust*. Co-produced by Bowie with engineer Ken Scott and propelled by a small, lethal band of Spiders – bassist Trevor Bolder, drummer Mick "Woody" Woodmansey and guitarist Mick Ronson – *Ziggy Stardust* was the first concept album of the rock-superstar age to address stardom itself. The feral sexuality of "Moonage Daydream" and "Suffragette City"; the thin line between dreaming and delusion in "Starman"; the fans who love too much at the end of

"*Ziggy Stardust*": This was the wonder and price of celebrity laid out in glitter and blood. Even the funky-country cover "It Ain't Easy" – written by Louisiana singer Ron Davies and retrieved from an earlier set of sessions – suited *Ziggy's* moral sting: "It ain't easy to get to heaven," Bowie sang, "when you're going down."

Ziggy was an ingenious amalgam of real-life precedents, including the Stooges' Iggy Pop; Vince Taylor, a notoriously

"You can't point to anyone else in rock who was so relevant for so long." - PAGE MCCONNELL

unhinged American rocker who was huge in France in the Sixties; and the Legendary Stardust Cowboy, a lunatic Texan and one-hit wonder in 1968. Yet Bowie, who was born David Jones and changed his surname in 1965 partly to avoid confusion with the Monkees' singer, knew how close he was in his own ambition to the precipice in his creation. "I'm going to be huge," Bowie announced in an interview even before *Ziggy Stardust* was released. "It's quite frightening in a way, because I know that when I reach my peak and it's time for me to be brought down, it will be with a bump."

That did not happen. *Ziggy Stardust*

was a Top Five album in Britain and the singer's explosive entrance into the American mainstream. But after retiring *Ziggy* as a role and image in 1973, Bowie – a restless explorer and master shapeshifter – continued to challenge and dazzle on pivotal triumphs such as the white-soul party, *Young Americans* (1975); the pioneering electronica of *Low* and *Heroes* (both 1977); the pop-tastic *Let's Dance* (1983); right up to this year's *Blackstar*, a searing meditation on mortality released two days before Bowie's death.

"You can't point to anyone else in rock who was so relevant for so long," claims McConnell. The pianist notes that this has been a hard year for loss with the passings of Prince, Merle Haggard, Keith Emerson and bluegrass patriarch Ralph Stanley, among others. "It's hard to know how to

honor them all." But *Ziggy on Halloween* "felt right. And there are no weak links – no fluff, no filler. Every sonic detail is intentional, more than on any other album we've covered."

Fishman contends that there is more Bowie in Phish than most fans of either would suspect: "Forcing yourself out of comfort zones" – a Phish trademark – "is something Bowie did in spades." And like two of Fishman's favorite band leaders, Frank Zappa and Miles Davis, Bowie was an uncanny judge of sidemen, who formed "great, different groups of players" for each new direction. "What is different in Phish," the drummer says, "is that what Bowie did," with rotating collaborators like Brian Eno, Nile Rodgers and Stevie Ray Vaughan, "we try to do by keeping the same four musicians." (continued)

June 15, 1973. Photo by Ilpo Musto / Rex Features



"I was the guy who didn't know this album," Gordon says of *Ziggy Stardust*. Compared to "other artists that I liked of that era," Bowie's music felt "brash, slammed in your face." But Gordon can now hear the connection in *Ziggy* "to 1950s rock & roll, how the chugging piano and down-to-earth rhythms are stretched out to the space stuff. I like weird juxtapositions. I just had to buy both ends of the contradiction."

"The cool thing about these Halloween albums," Anastasio says, "is that once you climb into them, it de-mystifies these titans of music. I realize they were teenagers with heroes too." One of Anastasio's favorite moments on *Ziggy* is Bowie's stuttering vocal twist on the Fifties' Elvis Presley in the breakneck chorus of "Hang on to Yourself." Other deep-jukebox references here: the staccato-guitar flourish in "Starman," descended from a lick in the Supremes' 1966 hit "You Keep Me Hanging On"; and the eccentric blend of sax and pennywhistle in "Moonage Daydream," adapted by Bowie from "Sho' Know a Lot About Love," the B-side of the Hollywood Argyles' 1960 R&B novelty "Alley Oop."

"We always set the bar high," Anastasio says of Phish's Halloween ritual. "But *Ziggy* is so seminal. Bowie is riding on the shoulders of the giants that came before — then pushing everything forward."

That "Space Oddity" at Wrigley Field was not Phish's first stab at Bowie — or even that song. The band threw an "Oddity" tease into Junta's "David Bowie" on October 26th, 1989 at the Wetlands Preserve in New York City. And "Life on Mars?" from Bowie's 1971 album, *Hunky Dory*, was performed 23 times between 1995 and 2012.

This evening's *Ziggy* is tradition with a few twists. It is the first Halloween album credited to a solo artist; the rest were all by bands, from *The Beatles* (a/k/a "The White Album") — Phish's first holiday prank in 1994 — to Little Feat's *Waiting for Columbus* in 2010. At 38 minutes, *Ziggy* is also

the shortest album Phish have ever played on Halloween, about two minutes under Talking Heads' *Remain in Light* (1996) and the Velvet Underground's *Loaded* (1998).

And inside that brevity, as McConnell noted, *Ziggy Stardust* is the most intricately arranged and executed collection of songs Phish have dared to learn, to the point that they have brought a string section and additional singers to get closer to trademark grandeur like the orchestrations in "Starman" and the album's foreboding opener, "Five Years." Phish have also spread out the lead-vocal duties across the eleven songs, reflecting the shifting theatrical dynamics in Bowie's vocals and his harmonies with Ronson.

"We talk quite a bit before we get into the same room together," McConnell says. "And we all have to learn the album on our own before we sit down. Then once we start playing, we start at the top of the album and go through the whole thing." The biggest revelations often come in private study. McConnell was already slated to sing the ballad "Lady Stardust" when he read that Bowie wrote it about his friend and competitor Marc Bolan of T. Rex. "Knowing that made me appreciate how to sing it," the pianist says. "The mutual respect and influence they had on each other informed my performance."

Gordon quickly picked up on Bolder's underrated bass work — "It has just the right amount of edge, and it bounces" — while Fishman likens Woodmansey's meaty yet precise drumming to that of the Band's Levon Helm in the way "two little hits on a snare can establish the feel of the chorus." And Anastasio is determined to express "my massive love and admiration for Mick Ronson," who first played with Bowie on the heavy, apocalyptic 1970 LP, *The Man Who Sold the World*, and became an indispensable consigliere, contributing string and vocal arrangements as well as a taut, guitar savagery on every Bowie record through 1973's *Pin Ups*.

"His parts were all melodies and counter-melodies," Anastasio says, citing the

backing vocals in "Moonage Daydream" and the strings in "Starman." But Ronson was "also more grounded. Where Bowie's head was in the clouds, he brought everything down to earth." The Fifties-rock piano all over *Ziggy* was played by Ronson as well.

Anastasio laughs when reminded of this fact: He was not yet eight years old when *Ziggy Stardust* was released in 1972. The guitarist has an uneasy memory of playing a "horrific version" of Bowie's late-'72 single "The Jean Genie" with a high-school garage band. But the album finally "crept up on me" in college, and Anastasio swears he didn't "get the concept of *Ziggy*" until Phish started learning it. In fact,

Anastasio has always believed that his favorite song, the finale "Rock 'N' Roll Suicide," is about something more spiritual and inclusive. He quotes a line in the second verse: "You walk past the café/But you don't eat when you've lived too long."

"It's such an accurate assessment," he says, "of so many people I knew, who felt lost. And I can relate to it. I've lived every detail." When Bowie wrote the song, Anastasio explains, "It was after the Summer of Love. Everything was buried by drugs — the winter of discontent. But he was writing, in his genius way, this summation of hope to all of the people who got caught up in this rock & roll thing, who believed in it." The key lyric, Anastasio agrees, comes in the final chorus: "Oh no, love! You're not alone."

The big question on the way to this



Photo by Michael Putland

Halloween: Where do you jam in a record as tight as *Ziggy Stardust*? Gordon suggests "the descending bridge" in "Moonage Daydream." "That was the first one," he says, "where the guys went, 'This could be stretched out.'" Fishman thinks the runaway outro to "Star" could be "a big, honking thing." Phish are also "comfortable just playing the record as it is," McConnell says. "It holds up just fine. You don't want to put on a big jam just because we're Phish."

Still, he assures, "We have left ourselves some room for improv." McConnell laughs. "Hopefully, there will be jamming."

It's Halloween, Phish are in the house and Bowie is in the air. Get ready to hang on to yourself.

“Confirmed that this movie is totally confirmed.” – Rolling Stone

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“I’m not sure you know what gullible means. It’s from a very reliable source. When it’s officially announced you can go ahead and eat a d****.” – Time Out

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“***** This thread is offensive.” – The New Yorker

“***** If your source is accurate, this is a preliminary thing that is in the works, but details won’t be worked out until later, and it could EASILY fall apart.” – Vanity Fair

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