

Former Grateful Dead Keyboardist, Tom Constanten, to Play Nelson Ledges

By Helen Marketti

As the keyboardist for The Grateful Dead from 1968 - 1970, Tom Constanten, who goes by "TC" has had many life experiences that have provided for an eclectic career. He will be doing a show on Saturday, July 7 at Nelson Ledges Quarry Park. Then on Wednesday, August 29, he returns to be a guest at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Tom will be speaking about his time with The Grateful Dead in conjunction with the Rock Hall's current exhibit, The Grateful Dead: The Long, Strange Trip. TC was inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame with the rest of the band in 1994.



"TC" Tom Constanten
Photo Credit - Don Alers

TC joined The Grateful Dead during the recording of "Anthem of the Sun" which was the band's second album. He and fellow Grateful Dead band member, Phil Lesh were roommates at Berkeley. He played historical places such as the Fillmore and was on board at the original Woodstock '69. Reflecting back on that time with the band as well as the culture of the era, TC said, "I think that time opened a cosmic corner of the possibilities for all of us. A rush came in for music, art, photography...you name it. We never had set lists when I was in The Grateful Dead. After we played a song, we would look at each other and say, "Well, what do we do now?" Being in the group provided me an

opportunity to tap in and use all of my music experiences. We were in the moment and that's what that time represented, to be in the moment."
TC is also trained in classical music and, in addition to creating his own classical pieces, he has been a Professor of Music at SUNY Buffalo and Artist-in-Residence at Harvard. "It became difficult to stay with teaching because I am away from home so much. It isn't something I could do on a steady basis," said TC.
In addition to being trained in classical music, playing rock and roll, and speaking several languages, TC was also a sergeant in the Air Force where he worked as a computer programmer. When we first think of computers but they existed and were used by the military.
Since he was a teenager TC has been writing orchestral pieces but does not have a preference for what style of music he plays. "I always enjoy playing and being where I am. I never regret the music I have done. What I regret is the music I haven't gotten to."
He continues, "I can get inspiration for new material from any angle at any time. It could be something I hear on the radio and

then I'll have a certain twist in my brain or I can hear something that someone says at a performance."
Each show is approached by TC with an open mind, "I have worked with so many different people over the years that I will probably make my mind up about what music I will do at Nelson Ledges once I get there. It makes it much more serendipitous and tailored to the moment. I might get an idea from something I hear someone say whether it's from a fan or band member. I have fifty years of preparation so I'm not too worried about it. (laughs) I'll show up and we'll see what happens. I'll probably be as surprised as everyone else!"
TC offers advice to those who have asked him for guidance over the years. "Be relentless and fearless. There is more work to this than you would imagine. There are promoters, agents and venues that you have to work with. The music is definitely the easy part. If I didn't have the attitude of showing up and wanting to do this, I would be doomed."
www.tomconstanten.com
www.rockhall.com
Nelson Ledges: www.nlqp.com

LITTLE FISH RECORDS/RISING TIDE ARTISTS & DSW/TRIBAL CONNECTION PRESENTS

TEXT
TROPVOICE
TO
72727

TROPTOWN



ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

SLIPPERY ROCK DUNES AUGUST 3-5

144 BARRON RD. SLIPPERY ROCK PA. 16057 - SLIPPERYROCKDUNES.COM

\$35 PRESALE - \$40 AFTER JULY 1 - \$45 AFTER JULY 27 - \$60 VIP BRUNCH & TSHIRT

LIVE PAINTING BY JUSTIN ROBERTS

BOOGIE MATRIX MECHANISM

JONES FOR REVIVAL

ELEMENTAL GROOVE THEORY

THE OHMS

5 ELEMENTS

LETHAL FX

ONE WORLD TRIBE

THE B-SIDE DUBS

WANYAMA

STEPS 2 CHANGE

BLUE MOON SOUP

RARE BREED

& MORE...



2 HRS FROM CLEVELAND

1 HR FROM ERIE

1 HR FROM PITTSBURGH

2 1/2 HRS FROM BUFFALO

VENDORS EMAIL TROPTOWN@GMAIL.COM