

Hunter S. Thompson, having just installed a super-high-powered satellite TV receiver, describing some of the more fucked up and cool shit he can now pick up:

Last night I pulled in a hazy black and white signal that was not even listed. It was an old Jim Morrison concert, or maybe a pirated video. These things are never made clear.

The Bird scans 22 satellites from West to East, six or eight seconds apart—maybe 200 channels full of old movies and Jesus freaks and raw network news feeds from places like WXYZ in Detroit, along with NASA transmissions from Houston and 40-year-old stag films out of Mexico City.

There is too much lame garbage—far more than a sane man can stand. With the right kind of equipment—or even the wrong kind, and a fine hand on the knobs—you can pick up the collected speeches of Henry Kissinger, a censored version of “Deep Throat”, and 101 Famous Games of the Harlem Globetrotters. There is no end to it: all day and all night, in some kind of relentless auto-reverse that never sleeps.

But you don’t get a lot of Jim Morrison. That is what we call a Special—straight black-and-white footage of Crazy Jim on stage in the old days, with a voice like Fred Neal’s and eyes smarter than James Dean’s and a band that could walk with the King, or anybody else. There were some nights when the Doors were the best band in the world.

Morrison understood this, and it haunted him all his life. On some nights he was noisy and lewd, and on others he just practiced—but every once in a while he would get it into his head to go out and dance with the big boys, and on a night like that he was more than special. Jim Morrison could play music with anybody.

One of these days we will get around to naming names for the *real* rock’n’roll Hall of Fame—in that nervous *right now* realm beyond Elvis and Chuck Berry and Little Richard—and the talk will turn to names like Bob and Mick, and to tunes like Morrison Hotel.

Play it sometime. Crank it all the way up on one of those huge obsolete wire-burning MacIntosh amps and 80 custom-built speakers. Then stand back somewhere on the mainbeams of a big log house and feel the music come up through your femurs... ho, ho... and after that you can always say, for sure, that you once knew what it was like to hear men play rock’n’roll music.