



Fresh News

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BIGGER THAN LIFE

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I first met Bob Flanigan in 1968 when I was 17 years old. For the last year and a half I'd been gathering together as many of the Freshmen's recordings as possible as a result of stumbling across my parent's copy of *Four Freshmen and Five Trombones*. They had just seen the group on the same bill with Billie Holiday and brought home that album. Even though I had already been playing trumpet in school for six years, I was especially attracted to vocal harmony so when I starting hearing these progressive chords sung by four men, it just turned my whole world around.

Like Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys, that's all I wanted to do — listen over and over to that sound, pulling back the vinyl needle repeatedly for some of the better moments until I could sing along with them, trying to discover what it was that thrilled me so.

Fast forward to 1984: As the musical director and DJ for KRML, a small jazz station in my hometown of Carmel, CA (where Clint Eastwood filmed *Play Misty For Me*) I drove up to San Francisco to interview Bob Flanigan while they were appearing at The Fairmont Hotel. When I asked him how he was able to keep it together all those years, he simply said, "Well, I'm a performer." He didn't say entertainer, musician, showman, or anything else. I think this was the essence of the man — he was a PERFORMER. It was obvious to everyone who saw The Four Freshmen that Flanigan was a stage presence to be reckoned with. At 6'4", his huge voice, trombone, and comic attitude let you know he was in town. (continued on page 2)

