



For two years starting in October 1966, Ann Arbor, Michigan was home to a swank teen nightclub called The Fifth Dimension. In contrast with most venues of its type, it was an architect-designed psychedelic showplace with trippy pulsating lights, a huge spinning op-art wheel at the entrance, splatter-painted wall panels, carpeted sitting mounds, a sunken (soda) bar, and a mod clothing store. Besides hosting local bands like Bob Seger & the Last Heard, the Rationals, the Scot Richard Case, the Thyme, the Hideaways, and Our Mother's Children, it featured many top British acts before they appeared anywhere outside the coasts.

The Who played their first headlining US show at the Fifth Dimension four days before the Monterey Pop Festival, the Jimi Hendrix Experience played its first top-billed inter-coastal gig there, Cream and Procol Harum played their first Midwestern dates, and the Yardbirds, Mothers of Invention, Pink Floyd, Jeff Beck Group, Van Morrison (sans Them), Them (sans Van), Left Banke, Blues Magoos, and Richard & the Young Lions all graced its stage.

The Fifth, as it was fondly known, was also home to weekly band matinees that featured up to six teen groups, served as a rehearsal space for Seger and others, hosted an afterhours blues/jazz club, and even offered occasional avant-garde dance and theater events. Signifying both the club's demise and the end of an era, the Fifth Dimension's last show was an anarchic concert by the MC5 and Stooges on October 8, 1968, held to finalize their joint signing to Elektra Records.

by Frank Uhle

