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MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY  
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

Journal of the  
Music & Entertainment Industry  
Educators Association

Volume 12, Number 1  
(2012)

Bruce Ronkin, Editor  
Northeastern University

Published with Support  
from



MIKE CURB COLLEGE of  
ENTERTAINMENT and MUSIC BUSINESS

**BELMONT**  
UNIVERSITY

## Reviews

**Will Hermes. *Love Goes to Buildings on Fire: Five Years in New York That Changed Music Forever*. New York: Faber and Faber, Inc., 2011. [www.fsgbooks.com](http://www.fsgbooks.com).**

Music scenes have played a major part in the development of popular music and the music industry for decades. *Rolling Stone* critic Will Hermes' book *Love Goes to Buildings on Fire*, whose title refers to an early Talking Heads song, documents the rich tapestry of music scenes happening in New York City from 1973 to 1978. The author was in high school in Queens during the time, and uses meticulously researched anecdotes and interviews along with personal experiences to give the reader an insider's view of both the music and its relationship to the city. The description is presented in a precisely chronological sequence, constantly switching between multiple narratives in a way that is very contemporary yet still cohesive. This technique emphasizes the simultaneity of the different musical movements growing up at the time, and also helps to describe the interaction between them. Creative hybrids and mixing of musical scenes and styles, which were common, are prominent themes throughout the book. In addition to the artists, Hermes documents in detail the contributions of labels, studios, radio stations, venues, managers, promoters, and music journalists who helped fuel and fund the musical creativity of the time.

New York was teetering on the edge of bankruptcy and riddled with crime and drugs during these years, and there is a strong focus on how music related to broader social and economic factors. The dangerous, edgy atmosphere that is described is difficult to imagine now, but one of the themes that emerges from the amalgam of interviews and stories is how such far-reaching creativity emanated during a time in which New York was deeply troubled. Many subcultures and alternative lifestyles flourished in the city during this era, and they were strongly connected with the various music scenes. Hermes skillfully analyzes how the city's economically challenged, unruly nature contributed to these movements.

The diversity and richness of music happening in New York during this time is astonishing; rock, disco, punk, hip-hop, minimalism, and free jazz were being defined and explored, and all influenced each other

in myriad ways. In the epilogue Hermes describes how the “concentrated vitality” of the 1970s music scene in New York could not be sustained as the city was revived economically. However, many of the artists, musical genres, and styles that emerged from this era are still important today, and the creative hybrids that were pioneered continue to evolve. *Love Goes to Buildings on Fire* offers great insights into how and why this unique set of musical and cultural scenes developed. It is an engaging and entertaining read that demonstrates how the creative, business, and social aspects of contemporary musical culture intertwined in a way that created a lasting impact for years to come.

Ben Neill



**BEN NEILL** is a composer, performer, producer, and inventor of the mutantrumpet, a hybrid electro-acoustic instrument. Neill’s music blends influences from electronica, jazz, and contemporary classical music, blurring the lines between DJ culture and acoustic instrument performance. He has recorded nine CDs of his music on labels including

Universal/Verve, Astralwerks, Six Degrees, Thirsty Ear, and Ramseur. In 2010 his music theater work *Persephone*, created with vocalist Mimi Gose and Ridge Theater, was presented at the Brooklyn Academy of Music Next Wave Festival. Other recent performances include Lincoln Center and Moogfest. As a concert presenter, Neill has organized shows for the River to River Festival and curated music for seven years at The Kitchen, both in New York City. He has also written and produced music for films, television, art installations and theater. Neill is an Associate Professor of Music Industry and Production at Ramapo College of New Jersey.

**Kathy Sloane. *Keystone Korner: Portrait of a Jazz Club*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2012. [iupress.indiana.edu](http://iupress.indiana.edu).**

I first met Todd Barkan at Dizzy's Coca-Cola Club in New York City, October, 2011. I was there in an official capacity, as manager/agent for jazz trombonist Wycliffe Gordon. We had booked a week at Dizzy's Club through Todd, who is programming director for Dizzy's, to celebrate Wycliffe's latest CD release *Hello Pops! A Tribute to Louis Armstrong*. Todd was there, working the room, introducing the band, and running the show. He spoke to me, and we made polite conversation. Although I found him to be a bit gruff, I knew instantly that he genuinely cared for Wycliffe, the show, and all the people in the room that came to hear jazz that night. What I didn't know (but would soon find out upon reading this collection of interviews), is that Todd is an actual veteran of this industry, a true jazz visionary with a passion for, and knowledge of, a rich musical heritage that otherwise could be lost except for people like him.

*Keystone Korner: Portrait of a Jazz Club* is a collection of images and interviews brought to life by photographer Kathy Sloane with editing of the interviews compiled by Sascha Feinstein. Luckily for us, Ms. Sloane was there during the bright moments of Keystone Korner. She always had her camera in tow with the good sense to capture the images of folks like the cook, Ora Harris, and waitresses, Helen Wray and Flicka McGurrin. Frozen in time are the incredible musicians who graced the stage night after night like trumpeter Eddie Henderson, pianist George Cables, saxophonist Dave Liebman, trombonists Steve Turre, Laurie Antonioli, Carl Burnett, Billy Harper, Calvin Keys, Eddie Marshall, Ronnie Matthews, and Bob Stewart and bassist David Williams. She continued snapping photos of people like sound man Stuart Kremsky, record producer Orrin Keepnews, publicist Terri Hinte, writers Jack Hirschman and Devorah Major, John Ross and Al Young, teacher Maria Rosa Keys, and of course Todd Barkan himself. These are faces of Keystone whose now archived images tell the story of its colorful and exciting twelve-year history.

The book is divided into seventeen short chapters, each highlighting a different aspect of the club and each told by various storytellers. The preface is told by writer, teacher, and California Poet Laureate Al Young. Mr. Young takes the reader on an historical journey of San Francisco's jazz clubs from before the Prohibition era to modern day, and helps tell the story of what it was like to experience live jazz during these various times.

He sheds light on how Keystone Korner might have gotten its name:

I enjoy imagining how Freddie Herrera, the original owner and anointer of Keystone Korner, contemplated the club's name: "Okay, so there's a police precinct next door. Why not let's make the best of this? Keystone, that's what we'll call it. We'll name it after the Keystone Kops!" (p. xxi)

A jazz club jammed up next to a police station—that was the reality of Keystone Korner. Mr. Young goes on to elaborate that having the word "stone" in the name of the business might also be *good* for business, especially during the 1970s. We learn that when Todd Barkan bought the club (for \$12,500 in July, 1972), and before he decided to feature jazz, it was featuring such acts as Jerry Garcia, Merl Saunders, and Elvin Bishop (p. xxii). Rock 'n' roll was becoming a big influence on jazz, and artists were succumbing to playing electronic instruments and music of the Beatles. Todd knew he wanted something different—a throwback to the bygone era when jazz was pure. And, so, it was reborn. At a time in San Francisco when virtually all the other jazz clubs had closed, Keystone Korner thrived and became a mecca for thirsty jazz musicians and audiences everywhere.

The next seventeen chapters are told by the various storytellers I mentioned above, each professing their love and respect for this iconic jazz club and sharing their fondness for its owner, Todd Barkan. Interspersed between these intimate stories are black and white photographs taken at Keystone Korner over its life span as a jazz club. Beautiful images of performing artists and poignant backstage moments are caught on film. These incredible images provide a rare glimpse into a world that doesn't really exist anymore. There are countless shots of musicians like Bobby Hutcherson and Dexter Gordon, and even a young Wynton Marsalis. There's Ahmad Jamal and the acclaimed Mary Lou Williams, Toots Thielemans, and Art Blakey, and even McCoy Tyner and Betty Carter. Candid shots of the appreciative Keystone audiences are interspersed between images of Todd and of the club itself with its small, intimate stage and its very large, psychedelic mural leading to the downstairs lounge where the artists would hang out.

Perhaps the best addition to the images and the interviews is a compilation recording that accompanies the text. The CD includes some of the most important musicians in the history of modern jazz and starts appro-

priately with one of Todd Barkan's guiding spirits: Rahsaan Roland Kirk, whose concerts became legendary for their transformative effervescence (p. 217).

There has been much talk about the recordings that took place at Keystone, and the way the recordings were handled, sold, and marketed. Most artists were never paid a dime for the recordings and many are still available today. Perhaps that is another topic entirely, and one that doesn't really get a lot of attention in this book. I will say, that listening to the recording while reading this book is almost transformative. Reading these stories and looking at the photos of the musicians while hearing the music coming from that very stage is remarkable. It's truly inspiring, yet nostalgic—sentimental, yet ground breaking.

Beginning with *Todd's Tune*, we learn of the young man, Todd Barkan himself, who purchased Keystone and turned it into one of the best jazz clubs San Francisco has ever known. We read of his humble beginnings growing up in Columbus, Ohio, becoming a jazz fanatic by the time he was eight years old (p. 1), and spending every penny on jazz records and concert tickets. He took his hippie self to Haight-Ashbury, playing blues gigs at Keystone Korner before he ever had the dream to purchase it and turn it into a jazz club. He was told that jazz music didn't sell well. However, if he wanted to purchase the club and book jazz musicians then he should give it a try. And try, he did. The next twelve years were full of triumphs and tribulations with Todd commenting that his greatest triumph in the world was just paying the rent (p. 3). We read about Todd's relationships with artists, how he was able to scrape enough money together to feature them for multiple week runs, and how he double-billed certain acts for the first time. We learn how his unique vision for presenting jazz enabled him to have sold-out audiences each night despite his weak business sense. There existed a permeating effort among those who brought life to Keystone. From Ora Harris agreeing to set up a kitchen in a closet so patrons and musicians could have a good home-cooked meal, to saxophonist Rahsaan Roland Kirk eventually moving to San Francisco just so he could play there on a regular basis, we are made aware of how each person who worked and performed at Keystone had a part in that cooperative spirit that made Keystone so very special.

The exposé continues with stories about the venue itself with chapter three, *The Space is the Place*, and chapter four, *The Backroom*. Chapter five, *Ora's Kitchen*, is told by Ora Harris, the club's cook.

The backroom was where musicians hung out after the concert. It was between the main room and Todd's office. And it was covered in incredible photographs of everybody who played there. You'd go back and talk to people, catch up with them. It was like the private part of the club. (Helen Wray, waitress at Keystone, p. 41)

...[T]here was something about the walls. I'd just walk around in a daze, looking at the walls in the backroom. (David Williams, p. 42)

The next stories talk about the business, or lack thereof, as told by some of the musicians who worked there. Chapter six is entitled *Taking Care of Business* and shines a light on how a lot of music organizations function, or unfortunately don't function, all that well. Things like ticket prices being set too low (they were only \$3.50 a show at Keystone), not having a liquor license in place, low pay or no pay for musicians and staff, and no contracts in place. Chapters seven, eight, and nine shed light on how Keystone was more than just a jazz club. It was a school—a place to learn about jazz and the musicians who brought it to life and to hear artists play together for the first time, experiencing the musical dialogues that would take place between the musicians. It was the ultimate pool of improvisational genius known only as jazz. There is a chapter on the great Dexter Gordon that provides the reader a rare glimpse into this man's personal space—what he liked to drink, and his stage habits. And then there are several chapters comparing the Keystone Korner to jazz clubs on the East Coast. There is a chapter from Orrin Keepnews, a record label executive from Fantasy Records who frequented the club and recorded within that space several artists with whom he worked. (This chapter by Orrin helps us understand the club from a more moderate viewpoint—he was neither a musician at the club nor a big fan of Todd's.) Chapter 14 is entitled *Bright Moments* and is a litany of who's who that graced the stage at Keystone, as well as a remembrance of everything that was great during those twelve years, shining a light on artists such as Miles Davis, Ornette Coleman, McCoy Tyner, and even Bill Cosby. Chapter 15 is aptly entitled *Rifficals* and is told by Jack Hirschman, a writer and visual artist who would come to the club and create politically inspired posters. Chapter 16, *Then and Now* looks back at the days of Keystone as compared to the

jazz scene today—not just in the Bay Area, but across America. And lastly, Chapter 17, *The End of Keystone*, a chapter that is somewhat speculative in nature as told by several of the storytellers, is a tale of why the club closed and how it was believed to have encountered its current fate with some blaming Todd's poor business regimen and others blaming the jazz fans' fickle attitudes.

Whatever the reader's decision is about Keystone Korner after reading this text, whether you loved it, believed in it, supported it, are saddened by it, or are energized by it, one thing is certain: "Keystone Korner was the quintessential jazz club" as is best confirmed by jazz musician Wynton Marsalis who appeared at Keystone with Art Blakey before anyone knew who he was, "With the down home feeling of your favorite neighborhood watering hole and with the special spark of international artistic charisma that a knowledgeable jazz audience brings to any environment, the Keystone was a happy home to people of all persuasions."

April Brumfield

**APRIL BRUMFIELD** is Coordinator of the Music Industry Studies Program and Associate Professor at Eastern Kentucky University and serves as Assistant Chair in marketing for the music department. She handles the careers and touring of a select group of artists including world-renowned jazz trombonist Wycliffe Gordon and trumpeter Rex Richardson. Brumfield has twenty years of experience in artist management, programming, fundraising, and special events management, and has a Masters in Arts Administration from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. She is a Kentucky Peer Advisory Consultant for the Kentucky Arts Council and presents yearly professional development workshops for Kentucky Artists. She is an active member of Jazz Educator's Network and enjoys playing the trumpet.





**Stephen Marcone. *Managing Your Band: The Ultimate Responsibility* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Wayne, New Jersey: HiMarks Publishing, 2010. [www.halleonard.com](http://www.halleonard.com).**

Now in its fifth edition, *Managing Your Band* continues to be the “go to” book for anyone pursuing the multifaceted career of artist management. Completed in 2010, the book contains the latest information on 360 deals, branding, and DIY without securing a deal with a major. It also takes a look at how to handle the quirky psychological traits of creative personalities. And for me, maybe that’s why I continue to be so high on this book; Marcone offers up-to-date standard information needed for the job, as well as “stuff” that fills in the cracks that other books don’t offer. As an industry vet for almost thirty-five years I still use this book as a resource.

Written in a minimalist style, the chapters are straightforward with, at times, meticulous citations, details, and explanations not offered elsewhere. For example, chapter one contains the classic project management model with examples of how to use it as a guide to complete tasks successfully. The marketing chapter offers examples of several successful branding campaigns, and statistical information concerning live performance revenues as well as the selling of recordings (“In 2008, only .10% of the new releases sold at least 250,000 copies”). Chapter six, “The Entertainment Company,” includes examples of several types of 360 deals with computations of the various clauses. (The author consulted with the CPA for Kiss, Three Doors Down, etc. for the details.) The touring chapter offers actual examples of the various models employed in the paying of artists by concert promoters, including split point deals and computing overages (Marcone consulted a leading booking agent). The job of the business manager (CPA) is detailed in its own chapter with an example of a funding proposal.

Two of the “left field” chapters are: Seven, “The Care and Feeding of the Creative” and Twelve, “Legal Battles.” Seven offers several psychological theories on the behavior and personality of the creative, and how to manage the business of their products (“‘Creativity itself is a quicksilver thing: an intangible, subjectively evaluated property, often purchased in commercial circles by the slightest whim or fancy.’ Edward Buxton”). In Twelve, two dozen examples of artist-manager lawsuits are described in a quasi-case-study format.

Whether trying your luck at entrepreneurship or teaching a course on it (each chapter contains objectives, a summary, and suggested projects plus a complimentary instructor's companion is available) this book is *the* guide to personal management.

Steve Leeds



Steven Leeds has worked for over thirty-five years in the industry starting as a radio producer, then doing radio promotion for Atlantic Records, moving into video and MTV in the 80s then working for Universal and Virgin/EMI. He holds a M.A. from S. I. Newhouse/Syracuse University and a B.A. from American University, and blogs/curates at [www.steveleeds.wordpress.com](http://www.steveleeds.wordpress.com). He is currently V.P. Talent and Industry Affairs at SiriusXM. Leeds is also an adjunct faculty member at Belmont University and William Paterson University.

**Simon Cann. *Jumpstart Your Music Career*. Boston: Course Technology/Cengage Learning, 2011. [www.cengage.com](http://www.cengage.com).**

It seems there is a market for an ever-expanding number of books about the music business. Cann is at his best when describing how a musician can maximize opportunities by dealing with the internet. He describes various social media services, and a number of channels to distribute one's music. The only obvious omission that I see is the Kickstarter platform, that has become the rage for fundraising.

A great deal of the book discusses business strategy, and although most of this discussion utilizes reasonable common sense, sometimes the generalities and clichés overtake the information. Another problem for the American reader is that many details of the book are useful if you are British, but for Americans the issue of value added tax, for example, is a non-existent one. When Cann moves over to a description of the "team" that assists artists he is at his weakest. All of this material is available in more sophisticated detail and accuracy in other books.

In general, I think this book is most useful not for students, but for do-it-yourselfers who are trying to get a handle on how to function in the music industry.

**Bernie Finkelstein. *True North: A Life In The Music Business*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2012. [www.mcclelland.com](http://www.mcclelland.com).**

I always marvel at how little Americans know about Canada. Finkelstein himself is low-key on this subject. One of his amusing comments in the book, discussing the Bruce Cockburn song *Call It Democracy* that was banned on U.S. radio, Finkelstein says "I have always said that when a song is banned in the U.S. it gets noticed, but when it's banned in Canada, it stays unknown. Another way to put this is to say that Canadians are very good at sweeping things under the carpet, while Americans are very good at selling the carpets."

Finkelstein is high school dropout who has had a long career as a personal manager, and owner of the Canadian label True North. Along the way he bluffed his way into major label record deals in America for his artist, co-managed a Canadian band called the Paupers with the fabled Albert

Grossman, and has managed innovative Canadian artist Bruce Cockburn (a relationship that has lasted over forty years, without a written contract).

The book offers a useful and lengthy description of how he and other Canadian entrepreneurs convinced the Canadian government to implement Canadian content radio laws, and then to establish FACTOR, the grant program that offers tour support, and funding for video and recording projects. Along the way there are the typically rock and roll lifestyle descriptions of Bernie's madcap workaholic life, concluding with his bypass surgery, weight loss, and the adoption of a more refined lifestyle. Not too refined, we infer.

**Milton Okun, as told to Richard Sparks. *Along the Cherry Lane: Tales from the Life of Music Industry Legend Milton Okun*. Beverly Hills, California: Classical Music Today, 2011.**

This is truly a remarkable book. Most music business biographies or autobiographies are either exercises in whipped cream and apple pie, "everyone has been wonderful to me," or they leave no stone unturned in describing thievery, double-dealing, and lies. Okun calls them as he sees them. When working with someone was a dream, as was the case with John Denver and Placido Domingo, he is complimentary and positive. When he feels someone has behaved unethically, he has no compunctions about naming names. For example, at the peak of Peter, Paul & Mary's popularity, Milt's royalties were 3.5%. Not of wholesale or retail, but of Peter's, Paul's, and Mary's royalties! So, if they were receiving a 10% of retail royalty, a pretty good deal in 1963, he would have been getting about 1/30<sup>th</sup> of 10%, or three tenths of one per cent!

In addition to detailing Milt's life as an arranger and producer, he goes into considerable and fascinating detail about Cherry Lane Music, his music publishing company. I was fascinated to discover that it took the company two years to figure out why they were not receiving any performance royalties from European television. What they uncovered was that each country in Europe has its own version of the necessary paperwork that must be filed with a cue sheet. Unfortunately the requirements are not uniform, and must be met precisely in order to receive proper payment. My favorite example is Portugal, where Milt reports that all cue sheets

must be filed in Portuguese.

Unlike Bernie Finkelstein, Milt Okun has led a relatively placid existence. The book details his career, and as I have already mentioned, names names and offers details about the many recording projects that Milt's name has been associated with. This is the most outstanding book I have read about the music industry in a number of years. Very few autobiographical works are truthful, informative, and relatively ego-less.

Dick Weissman

**DICK WEISSMAN** is a musician and composer who has written numerous recorded songs and instrumentals, and is now concentrating on placing music in film and television. He is the author or co-author of nineteen books about music and the music business, including *Understanding The Music Business*, and *Talkin' 'Bout A Revolution: Music and Social Change in America*.

