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Edward Lewis and Decca in 1954, headed by the superb writing team of Ian Dove, Peter Jones and Norman Jopling.

"Disc followed in 1958 and featured two great writers, Penny Valentine, who would go on to write the seminal bio of Dusty Springfield with *Ready Steady Go!* alumni Vicki Wickham; and June Harris, with whom I witnessed Sam Cooke and Little Richard with in 1962. I was doing PR for the tour. June went to the US in 68 with The Who, said who needs this, met and married the man who single-handedly changed the American road, Premier Talent's Frank Barcelona.

"In America you only had music magazines for the trade until the Beatles and Gloria Stavers with her *16 Magazine*. Jann Wenner came later with the American clash of music, drugs, Vietnam and FM radio.

"In the UK the four music papers post Beatles would reach one million punters per week. We were read about and could read about ourselves. It was a direct and valuable link.

"Norman Jopling at the *Record Mirror* was the first to write about the Rolling Stones, and their editor Peter Jones suggested I go see them and that is why I am here. The *MM's* Ray Coleman went on to ghost the Bill Wyman bio amongst others on the Beatles and Brian Epstein. Ray was to the word what the late Terry O'Neill was to pictures - they always had our back.

"I wrote a column for *Disc* or *Record Mirror* for a while, so did Jack Good and Jonathan King. Later writers would try to emulate the life styles of their subjects. I was lucky to welcome the first run when we were all welcomed into the game by other lucky fuckers," volunteered Oldham, who in 2020 will be teaching a full credit 13-week course in Canada at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia, *Rock Dreams: A History, 1954-1984 Up Close and Personal with Andrew Loog Oldham*.

Bands were formed from the back page classified section, musicians gathered at the *Melody Maker* head office on Fleet Street eager to be interviewed by *Melody Maker's* reporters with their new unreleased tracks in hand during this evolutionary period in rock 'n' roll.

*Melody Makers* tells the story of the rise and fall of the most influential music publication in history, *Melody Maker* magazine.

*MELODY MAKER* WAS THE PRIMARY source of exposure for the up and coming musicians, and these ambitious young journalists who shared a common passion, the music. Contrary to the adversarial relationship that would later evolve between artist and the press, Barrie Wentzell and scribes were given editorial free reign and unprecedented access.

*MELODY MAKER* WAS A POP CULTURE phenomenon and this was, to a great extent, due to its Chief Contributing Photographer, Barrie Wentzell and his black and white photos that blistered across the front cover weekly.



Filmmaker Coles met rock n' roll photographer Wentzell in 1996 at in Canada Artscape, a work-live space for professional artists located in the heart of Queen St. West, Toronto.

Over the years Wentzell regaled her with stories about his days with *Melody Maker* (1965-1975) when he unwittingly found himself intimately chronicling the birth of rock n' roll and amassed a unique collection of archival black and white photographs.

Actress, producer, writer, director Leslie Ann Coles dedicated 18 years to choreography and modern dance before transitioning into film and TV with her debut 2001 multiple-award-winning film *In The Refrigerator: Spirit of a Haunted Dancer*.

Sound composer, designer Chip Yarwood worked with Coles on her first film and prior to that on all her Dance Theatre productions.

Current work with which she's engaged include theatrical features, non-scripted TV, documentary, and interactive digital media.

Coles is a Women In the Director's Chair alumni, a recipient of three CTV Banff Fellowships for original series, and

Founder and Executive Director of *The Female Eye Film Festival* (est. 2001).

In tandem with the theatrical launch of *Melody Makers*, Leslie Ann created a special edition Interactive Digital Media / iBook. Designed for all mobile devices, the *Melody Makers* iBook will be available to drive exposure and sales for the feature film. The interconnected visual journey of the IDM contains a photo gallery, trailers, interactive rock trivia games, rock picture puzzles and embedded B roll. The VOD release in Canada will include the 95 min. director's cut released in Canada 2019 supported by Telefilm Canada.

### LESILE ANN COLES INTERVIEW

DURING DECEMBER 2019 I INTERVIEWED Leslie Ann Coles about *Melody Makers* after her recent visit to Hollywood and a viewing of her movie inside a Sunset Blvd. screening room.

**Q: Why did you decide to do this movie?**

Barrie Wentzell and I met in 1996, as we both had studios in the same artists' building in Toronto. At the time, I was seeking a photographer for my dramatic short film, *In The Refrigerator*. Barrie took the photos and we became fast friends. Photography has always intrigued me as a reflective medium; it triggers spontaneous memory and associations. It was Barrie's anecdotal stories behind his iconic rock photographs that inspired me to tell this story.

**Q: Did you know and feel Barrie's photo catalog and available visuals could work as the epicenter in a movie? As well as other photographers you present and display.**

Indeed, I did. It was through Barrie that I met other photographers which inspired the concept for a limited documentary series, *F-Stop*. It won a CTV Banff Fellowship but coincided with the onslaught of reality television at that time; no one was interested in a series that featured music photojournalists. I decided to forge ahead with a documentary film starring Barrie, the veteran photographer. There are two other photographers whose works are featured in *Melody Makers*, namely, Jill Furmanovsky (UK), and Edie Steiner (Canada). They were perfect additions in the telling of this story.

**Q: What were the things that impressed you the most about his photo work?**

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What blew me away about Barrie's work was his use of natural light and his unprecedented access to the musicians he photographed. Barrie took their photos not only during live performances, but also during the actual interviews. This would be unheard of today. Barrie's more candid shots are my favourite. He captures the spirit of the artists. I was intrigued by his perspec-

tive and filmed large format photographs, contact sheets and even the negatives which are seen throughout the film. His images literally fill a 30 ft. screen!

**Q: As a dancer and actress, what was the one thing from that journey that aided this film?**

Having dedicated eighteen years to dance as a choreographer and performer, this

played a role in the visual treatment of the documentary. I deliberately "choreographed" the images, the movements between the stills and subjects were something I paid close attention to. The crew members who worked with me previously were the DOP, Mark Bochsler, sound recordist Michael Cole, and still photographers Inger Whist and Liam McDonnell.

**Q: What were some of the**

*initial tasks? Did you have a script? Besides Barrie, did you get some commitments from the MM staff and assurances for involvement?*

Originally, it was intended to be an intimate artist portrait within the context of a television series so I did not have a script for a theatrical feature film. The treatment grew out of my conversations with Barrie.

It was Barrie who insisted I go to London to interview his colleagues so I pre-interviewed *Melody Maker* journalists, Chris Welch, Chris Charlesworth, Richard Williams and Mick Watts and I spent time in the British Library researching the *Melody Maker* magazine archives. All of this informed me of a much bigger picture.

**Q: How long did it take to make the film? How did the initial funding even happen?**

It took ten years if you include the development of the series concept. It took over eight years to make the feature documentary.

**Q: What happened when you began the cinematic trek and then a slew of items were revealed? Perhaps it became more than a document of a photographer and the world of *Melody Maker*.**

So much was revealed to me along the way. Documentary filmmaking is like opening Pandora's Box and this became most evident when I was researching and interviewing in London.

**Q: What were some obstacles in the path?**

The cost of licensing the music was prohibitive even though I created a prototype for an App to include the music, a photo gallery, and other interactive elements that could be monetized to benefit the creative partners and inves-

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tors. It was a hard sell. I received development support and a pre-license from CBC to complete the project, but I never had production financing. Regardless, we completed the film and the Melody Makers App is available on Apple Books with the photos, embedded video, interactive picture puzzles and rock trivia games.

**Q:** Bruce Cowley, Mark Sanders and Richard Hannett were essential members of your team.

When the story evolved to include the history of *Melody Maker* magazine, Martin Harbury of the Film and Television Consultant for the Ontario Media Development Corporation entrusted me with \$25,000 to go off to London to pre-screen and interview *Melody Maker* staff. Mark Sanders then came on board as a producer and he got us back to the UK to conduct the final interviews.

Then, Bruce Cowley, the Commissioning Editor for CBC, The Documentary Channel, licensed the film based on a rough cut. This enabled me to complete the film. Richard Hanet, an entertainment lawyer, stuck with me from the start.

**Q:** Biggest challenge? I would suspect "rights holders" and former/current MM library ownership scenario that were solved so we could view this film.

The biggest setback was when Time Inc. bought IPC (the publisher of *Melody Maker* magazine). I had just locked the picture and had spent CBC's money to finish and suddenly the cost of using the actual *Melody Maker* magazine covers that featured Barrie's photos became prohibitive.

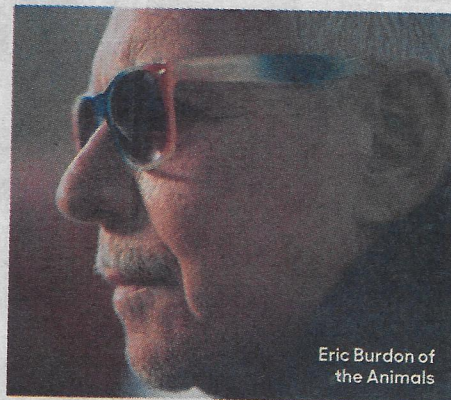
The gentleman in charge of licensing at Time Inc. demanded much more money than what I had previously negotiated with IPC. I thought I had to remove the magazine's content. So, I embarked upon an aggressive email campaign whereby I implored the CEO's at Time Inc., to honour the original terms of my agreement. In the end, I think I just wore Time Inc. out and their only requirement was the disclaimer that appears in the tail credits.

**Q:** Reflect on the script writing. Was some done before it started and expanded as the years went passing by?

Barrie was the inspiration for the original story and it continued to evolve when I met the journalists, musicians and others. I was fascinated to learn IPC publishers of *Melody Maker* had opened an office in New York during *MM*'s prime, but it was short lived because the newsstands were owned by the mob in the 70's. The Brits weren't inclined to pay the kickback to the mafia.

**Q:** There is no narrator. That's very refreshing. Was that planned in your pre-production?

I was dead set on not having a narrator from the beginning. Barrie is at the heart of the story.



**Q:** Licensing the music we do hear in the film. Director Peter Whitehead saved the day on some levels.

Peter insisted on seeing my earlier work before he would agree to participate as a subject. Fortunately for me he loved *In The Refrigerator*. He then licensed his original footage of Pink Floyd playing at the UFO Club (circa 1965), and Roger Waters granted me the rights to the music that accompanied the footage. Peter's archival film footage in the film includes Allen Ginsberg, the Rolling Stones, and Pink Floyd.

**Q:** What about cameras, film stock, equipment. You've been in the frame game for a while and must have had some subject specific lenses, film stock and cameras to employ around directing.

My early interviews with Barrie established the visual style and tone. That said, the film was shot over a lengthy period of time, so I worked with different camera operators but it was all shot using high definition digital cameras.

**Q:** Do you now have a philosophy about shooting interview subjects?

You must be engaged in listening. The best interviews are derived from establishing a sense of intimacy and this stems from a place of trust. You have to forget about the camera and crew once you start rolling and the interviewee will then do the same.

**Q:** When you edit these chats down tell me about your editing process and method.

I cut the film like a scripted feature. I enjoyed choreographing the interviews and the imagery in post-production. For example, there are two sequences whereby three different subjects are reminiscing about Keith Moon so I edited it as if there were three people at a party telling a different story about Moon simultaneously. The stories intersected thematically, and it worked. I layered the film using an A, B and C story line. "A" being Barrie's story; "B" is the trajectory of *Melody Maker* magazine, and "C" speaks to the changes in the music industry and the coinciding decline in *MM*'s popularity. By the mid-seventies the music scene changed with the emergence of punk, and the industry was big business. With that came restrictions and limited access.

Barrie Wentzell, unlike music photographers today, holds copyright to his photos following a grueling eight-year legal battle to regain ownership of his photo archive. His collection features virtually every notable artist that emerged between 1965-1975 namely, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Jimi Hendrix, the Who, David Bowie, the Kinks, Marianne Faithfull, the Rolling Stones, and Elton John, just to name a few.

#### PHOTOGRAPHER, BARRIE WENTZELL INTERVIEW

IN DECEMBER 2019 I INTERVIEWED Barrie Wentzell in Toronto about his career, Jimi Hendrix and *Melody Makers*.

**Q:** Your philosophy on taking photos

I treated everybody the same and always wanted to put them in their best light. I was at *Top of the Pops* and "Purple Haze" was out and I asked him if I could take a few snaps at the BBC and there was very little light. But one stairwell and I took some pictures there, a couple weeks before I had been photographing Cream and Eric Clapton. That's how I found the spot and the only place where I could get natural light, there was always people

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