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Record stores fans will find both joy and sadness in DVD documentary 'I Need That Record!'

May 3, 11:39 AM • Vintage Rock 'n' Roll Examiner • Steve Marinucci



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Brendan Toller

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It's not news that independent record stores are fading away like dinosaurs. Who doesn't have great memories of hanging out at them?

San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York and Berkeley are just a few of the cities that had great stores. But many of those stores, such as Rather Ripped Records in Berkeley and Aron's in Los Angeles, are gone. But not forgotten.

Watching "I Need That Record!," a fascinating DVD documentary by Brendan Toller that shows the problems faced by the indies in recent years, brings back a lot of nostalgic feelings for anyone who spent a lot of time in their life pawing through record bins. It's also sad that the community feelings of these stores won't be experienced by young generations of music fans who only know iPods and LimeWire.

The film tells the story of several record store dealers who have been forced to close or forced out of business. There are dealers who have been forced to close because of dwindling sales. There's also the sad story of

one forced out of business when a neighboring shopkeeper took over his space at lease renewal time.

The factors that led to the closings aren't limited to downloading, say the filmmakers. The problems include, but aren't limited to, high CD prices, bad marketing, big stores like Best Buy and the RIAA lawsuits against users,

The film features many well-known names speaking out on the issue. These include Thurston Moore of Sonic Youth, Lenny Kaye of the Patti Smith Group, Chris Frantz of Talking Heads/the Tom Tom Club, rock photographer Bob Gruen and activist Noam Chomsky. The DVD also includes two hours of extended interviews with Kaye, Moore, Mike Watt of the Minutemen, composer Glenn Branca, Pat Carney of the Black Keys and others.

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