

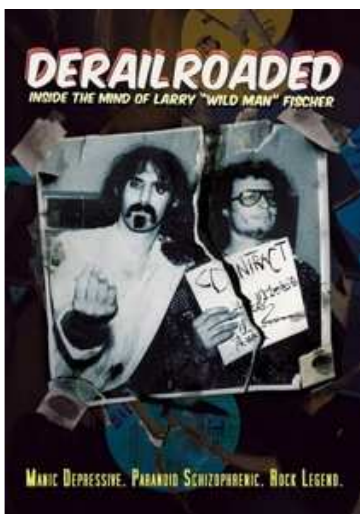
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THE GARY PIG GOLD REPORT, Vol. 36

INSIDE THE MIND OF LARRY "WILD MAN" FISCHER



He made his television debut 43 years ago in front of 18 million incredulous viewers, had his initial recordings produced by an equally perturbed **Frank Zappa** and even helped launch the foremost specialty music label by writing and performing its very first release, *Go to Rhino Records*. Yet **Larry "Wild Man" Fischer** continues to dwell, most unhappily and tragically, in a truly bizarre world where **Al Yankovic** instead has taken "weird" all the way to the bank.

All of the dialogue below is taken from **Josh Rubin's** stellar documentary on the original wild man, *Derailroded*, which is newly available on DVD from MVD Visual. It is a film you must see now — and often.

Irwin Chusid (author, *Songs in the Key of Z*): "Outsider music is a slippery genre. It's musicians who tend to be self-taught, untrained, working way outside mainstream music. They're not doing it to be funny. They're not doing it to be outrageous. This is a sincere musical expression. Wild Man Fischer in many ways is a poster child for outsider music."

Mark Mothersbaugh (Devo): "At his best, he's mainlined right into this creative subconscious. It's coming from a pure place."

Solomon Burke (Fischer's initial mentor): "A very, *extremely* talented young man."

Larry Fischer: "I just think I'm the best rock singer in the world."

David Fischer (Larry's older brother): "I still don't think he's a good singer. I might be wrong."

Larry: "You know what happened to my career? *Nothing*. I have *nothing*. Once in a while I go out and sing, but that's very rare. I'm too scared of the music business. And I'm too scared of all the people in it."

Billy Mumy (producer, *Pronounced Normal, Nothing Scary*): "It's unfortunate that Larry has not had more commercial success. But Larry is a manic-depressive paranoid schizophrenic. And that is an interesting mixture of energy."

Dr. Louis Sass (professor of clinical psychology, Rutgers University): "A person with schizophrenia is characterized by delusions. Usually auditory

hallucinations. A lot of it has to do with a feeling of conspiracies being directed at you. Everyone's out to *get* you."

Larry: "There's people after me. I just don't know *who's* involved. It's been a nightmare. All kinds of things have happened to me. Things that you would not believe."

Gail Zappa: "The thing about Los Angeles — there are a *lot* of freaks here. People that have figured out a way to, in spite of society, express themselves. Larry is just another one of the freaks."

Larry: "The first audition I went on was for *Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In*. And I got it."

Dan Rowan (*Laugh-In* episode No. 16, 1968): "Now that he's been exposed on national TV, don't you think he'll fly to stardom?"

Frank Zappa (producer, *An Evening with Wild Man Fischer*): "I thought that from the very first day I met him, somebody should make an album about Wild Man Fischer."

Larry: "Frank Zappa told me that he could make me a rock star. And if Frank Zappa told you that, wouldn't you think you might be able to become a rock star?"

Frank Zappa: "I spent three months working on the Wild Man Fischer album. And at the end, not only was I accused of robbing and cheating and abusing him — most of this from Wild Man Fischer himself — but the album did not sell a large amount of copies."

Larry: "Well, I never became a rock star. Frank Zappa fired me. That's it."

Gail Zappa: "I never thought that he would have a real career. And I see him now, and he looks like a very, very exhausted version of that person that I knew then. He's almost identical."

David Fischer: "Larry never seemed to have any money, no matter how many albums the guy was doing. It was beyond me. If they do an album on somebody and if it's not successful, why are you doing another? And what was *he* supposed to get out of it? I mean, he certainly was very upset and bitter about it."

Mothersbaugh: "He'd call me up and go 'Mark, I'm quitting show biz. Do you blame me?' I'd go, 'No, I don't blame you. It's an awful business.' He would quit show business about two or three times a week."

Sass: "I think there are a lot of different reasons why people are drawn to Larry's music. One of them is a little bit like the reason why people a century or two ago would go to the asylums to look at the patients. It's a kind of voyeurism to stare at this person who seems so weird and so uninhibited. But a second reason, of course, is that we're really moved by what he says and the story that he tells of his life and of his sufferings."

Mothersbaugh: "He's a force of nature. He's a bard in the best of ways. If he grew up in Mongolia, he might have been considered a shaman. And everything that he is and does would be tolerated."

Larry: "The main reason I got into the music business was to impress my family, earn a living, complete my dream. But I knew I would never be able to tour. I'm too paranoid."

"I guess I'm getting older now. I can't be a musician/singer anymore. I'm too old. I *want* to be a musician/singer."

"I want to make everybody happy."

— *Musician/writer Gary Pig Gold is the co-founder of the To M'Lou Music label.*

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