

# Movie City News

Because There Are Enough Stooges In Hollywood



**“Unauthorized: The Story of Rock N Roll Comics”** examines another interesting sidebar to the history of the musical genre. Long before the phrase, “The Internet wants to be free,” was introduced to studio and label executives hoping to capitalize on the popularity of the Web, rock fans fought efforts to monetize an art form spawned in the garages of suburban America and nurtured in musty nightclubs from Hamburg and Liverpool, to the Sunset Strip and Lower Manhattan. Such anti-establishment thinking reached its apex when tens of thousands of fans stormed the fences at Woodstock, turning it into a “free festival” (apart from the album and movie revenues). Bill Graham would find ways to keep the barricades intact, but some folks still found it unseemly to bow to the gods of rock ‘n’ roll capitalism. Such was the thinking of comic-book publisher Todd Loren, who refused to pay for the right to depict the stories and myths surrounding some of the 1980-90s’ most popular entertainers, including Kiss, Alice Cooper, Bon Jovi, Led Zeppelin, Guns N Roses, Motorhead and Skid Row. Loren stood up to the artists’ lawyers, citing the same First Amendment rights that allow for parodies and satire. Any sympathy we may develop for Loren, though, is diluted by the knowledge that he was as likely to rip off his stable of talented artists as he was to publish an unauthorized biography of the latest pop sensation or assign salacious stories on Tipper Gore and other perceived enemies of free speech. By all accounts, Loren was an egomaniacal asshole, who couldn’t comprehend the concept of keeping employees and contract workers happy for the sake of the product. He was murdered in 1992, possibly by the same sociopath who stalked and killed Giorgio Armani. The documentary benefits from the inclusion of the comics themselves and plenty of interviews with artists, industry reps and such rockers as Alice Cooper and Mojo Nixon.

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