



The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics: Interview with Rob Hauschild



Nitehawk is hosting a rare screening of *The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics* for brunch on Saturday (April 28) and Sunday (April 29). *The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics*, directed by Ilko Davidov, charts the short and controversial life of publisher Todd Loren, whose scandalous series of unauthorized comic book biographies of rock stars led to a landmark First Amendment case, and possibly his murder. Hatched had a chance to ask a few questions about the film to Rob Hauschild from Wild Eye Releasing who is distributing this must-see documentary.

Could tell us why Wild Eye decided to release this film?

I grew up in the right era to buy Rock 'N' Roll Comics when they were first hitting record shops, and was a fan from the start. Regardless of the subject matter or even the varying quality in some of the art issue to issue, there was something instantly sympatico about a company that boasted the fact that they were anti-establishment, lo-fi, disrespected by their peers, and totally unauthorized. The R'N'R Comics aesthetic fit right in with the cassette bootlegs, fanzines and hand drawn show flyers of its

time – it was punk rock in practice as a comic book company. They were paying respect to bands and artists they loved, but bands who were already part of the system in one way or another, while flipping the bird and profiting off that system in the same swipe. That was like a direct line into my heavy metal-infused, ‘fuck the system’ brain that etched a lasting impression. Years and years later, I came across a trailer for the documentary after it had made the festival rounds and remained undistributed, and watched all these perceptions from my young mind about Todd Loren and Rock ‘N’ Roll Comics come to life on screen – they really were these outlaw artists fighting the system on a daily basis for their rights to publish and make a living. On top of that, there’s a murder mystery and a supreme court case and all these industry in-fights and creator-rights issues surrounding this little independent comic book company. So I thought our little independent distribution company was the perfect fit. But it’s a huge, very important story to both the comic book and music worlds, and it needs its fair chance to scream from the mountain. □□

What (if any) legal implications are involved?

Not many for Wild Eye as far as releasing the film, as we have had a tremendous amount of support from the film’s producers and all the original RnR Comics creators who were involved in the film helping along with the DVD. The only time I felt a little tinge of what Todd and his crew must have gone through all that time was when I was asked by our retail distributor to change an early cover design we had that featured one of the KISS RnR Comics on the cover. Even though KISS were supporters/ eventual collaborators with RnR Comics, and Gene Simmons even makes an audio cameo in the film, I was told that KISS are very litigious about their logos/ make-up and this would not fly. So, even the DVD release of a movie about comic book censorship was a little bit censored, but I feel in good company with Todd and Jay and the RnR Comics crew – and now have a tiny little sidebar to add to their legend.

How did the project come to be?

I think that is best left for producer/ director Ilko Davidov to answer. □□*And we will in an upcoming interview later on this week!*

<http://nitehawkhatched.com/2012/04/23/the-story-of-rock-n-roll-comics-interview-with-rob-hauschild/>