

Hatched

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Interview with Ilko Davidov, Director of "The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics"

Gearing up for Nitehawk's two-day screening of *The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics* this weekend, Hatched chats about the legalities and love of rock with the doc's director Ilko Davidov from BulletProof Film.

How did you become interested in the Rock 'N' Roll comics and, in particular, the life-and-death story of Todd Loren?

Upon meeting Scott Jackson, the artist who did most of the covers for the books, and him telling me the story of Todd Loren and Revolutionary Comics, I was really intrigued. A couple of years later, I got a call from Ian Shirley, who was writing an article about the story for Mojo Magazine in London, and had talked to Todd's father, Herb Shapiro, and some others. That conversation filled in some blanks, and after discussing with my producers Carmine Cervi and Chris Swider, the decision to start filming was made. A story like this with the characters, rock'n'roll. art, first amendment. unsolved murder... Hard to pass on it as a filmmaker.



Do you believe that Todd Loren was murdered because of his comic biographies or because of his sexuality?

Or it could be something else... We don't know, I am certainly not ready to speculate. We have suggested the different theories in the film, and everyone has their own. It is an open case, and hopefully one day we'll know what really happened.

Considering the crux of the Rock 'N' Roll comics story deals with the First Amendment and litigious battles, what sort of clearances and permissions did you have to legally secure in making this film?

The legal documents are in the public record, so that wasn't an issue. We only had to license and get permissions to use music, archival footage, and the artwork.

Did you come across anyone that refused to take part in the documentary either because of a personal grudge against, lasting resentment, or legal issues regarding Loren?

Yes, a number of musicians and music business representatives declined our requests for interviews. We contacted almost all of the subjects of the books, and as you can see in the film, only a couple agreed.

The documentary really captures a special moment in rock history. It's like a love-letter to the love-letters to music that were the basis of the comics. Do you feel like this sort of fan passion is a thing of the past?

Yes, that is a great observation. I see fan passion nowadays as well, and maybe I am biased because I am of that generation, but while we still see idolizing some individual rock stars, the fan camaradery and community that existed back in those days seems to have been lost. There is no social social movements connected to music, the way it was with the 60's counter-culture, Punk Rock, or Heavy Metal.

The Story of Rock 'N' Roll Comics screens at noon this Saturday (April 28) and Sunday (April 29). After the screening there will be a Skype Q-and-A with cast and crew. [More info and tickets here.](#)

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