



[Last Shop Standing](#)

Various Artists

Convexe Entertainment - CVX903106 (DVD)

Available from [Proper Music](#),
or better yet from your local brick and mortar record store.

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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As I said in the critique of *Brick and Mortar and Love* ([here](#)), MVD circulated two DVDs in celebration of the trans/multi-continental Record Shop Day, and this is the Brit side of the story. It ends much more upbeatly than the American chronicle, and I, a Los Angelesan, can well vouch that we in Yankland have very little to hang our hopes on, having seen mom 'n pop shops down over the last 10-15 years. Not that the economy answered to every case, however. There was one shop, for instance, down in Redondo Beach, California, where the owner of the Round Sounds hovel, Ed Wilson, was a complete attitudey idiot with zero business sense, nor was he unaccompanied all around the U.S. The economy, though, accounted for the lion's share of failures, and music collectors still have record Mecca (California's three Amoeba Records locations, with **its** share of business pricks as well—are ya listening, Rick Frystak?—but saved by a business plan outlasting its poorer choices in employees) and just enough other venues to keep us barely alive. Barely.

England, interestingly, was home to an even more brutal plague than America's, losing 90% (!!!) of its UK slab-sell venues. What emerges in the *Last Shop* documentary, then, is much more in a line with investigative journalism than the *Brick and Mortar* movie but still falls well short of a number of factors, and one overarching element that almost no one is aware of...except me, of course, your troublemaking little FAME muckraker. I'll get to that in a minute but first want to contrast the two flicks,

Last Shop is brisk and highly edited, an MTV-ish kinda snap-snap-snap affair that keeps you on your toes and gets a hell of a lot more data across. *Brick and Mortar* is a down-home, sauntering, jes' folks slo-mo gig approaching the subject exactly like walking into the shop in question and talking over tea (or beer). It answers almost no questions at all, certainly keeps suspiciously well away from substantive matters, but embodies precisely what the average consumer sees and hears as such instances trot across the landscape. *Last Shop* is savvier, the shop owners much more informed as to the entire situation and industry in the UK than in the States, and ya gotta love those English accents and ways! More than once, the film comes across as a comedy of manners.

In *Last Shop*, you also hear from Billy Bragg, Paul Weller, Johnny Marr, and several other luminaries, all commenting on the necessity for the record shop, the place where the freaks, artists, and collectors go to live their real lives, where dreamers can walk right into their dreams, fork over some cash for treasure, and float back home again to add to their somnambu-storehouses. And *Shop* comes in two editions now: the straight hour-long documentary and then the documentary plus 70-minutes of added bonuses, longer interviews and such. If you're a true-blue collector and aficionado, I don't have to tell you which one to obtain.

Both films are definitely worth picking up, though the appeal will be limited to those it shows studiously shuffling through the shops, looking for booty, but I can tell you what neither conveys and most likely aren't even faintly aware of. I covered the matter in *E!* magazine a couple decades ago and got pummeled a bit by publisher Darren Bergstein for doing so. I covered it in *OpEdNews.com* and got tramped on by its moron publisher, the troglodytic arch-Republican Rob Kall. And I covered it in my anarchist newsletter *Veritas Vampirus* (800 issues as of this month) and finally found a warm reception through its highly intelligent and gentlemanly editor/publisher (me), though the matter wasn't of all that much interest to the readership. **Sign**, the things non-collectors think aren't important!! But that revelation is this: the laser turntable.

That's right, the laser turntable. Most don't even know it exists yet you can buy one right now, this minute, if you wish. You'd better do it quickly, though, because, like the electric car, the major labels hate the device with a burning passion, and manufacturers like ELP are getting rid of stock as quickly as they can (which isn't very, due to its invisibility). Shockingly, much of the data on the beast has been scrubbed from industry and public annals, but you can still find data on it, on Akio Morita (Sony Japan), and on others involved in its manufacture and doom. Doom? Yes, doom, because, had it been mass marketed as it should have been, it would've short-circuited the oceanic obscene profits made by the majors in forcing vastly inferior product, the CD, on consumers rather than allowing a provably superior mode into the market. Superior? Without a doubt, because the laser turntable, 'ysee, solved all the problems associated with vinyl: surface noise, pops and clicks, all of them went away with advanced circuitry compensating beautifully for such phenomena. And the mode delivered the best sound that, to this very day, has ever been produced.

You can verify that claim, too. Just pour old audiable recordings, and you'll find quite a few tests where the copies from laser

you can verify that claim, too. Just scour old audiophile magazines, and you'll find quite a few tests where the sonics from laser turntables surpassed every audio format known to man. I can testify to it myself, 'cause I heard a demonstration at a high-end convention in Santa Monica one year and was astounded at the transparency and fidelity of the sonics. Had the industry not covertly and methodically sabotaged the device and had you been able to buy one, you would now have the most outrageous sound capabilities ever heard by human beings, you wouldn't have spent thousands of dollars on piece of shit CDs with their tinny sound envelopes, and mom 'n pop vinyl shops would have made a LOT of money on their back-stock...but then, as both films here pay silent witness to, the moms and the pops running the shops never were in the least aware of what the hell was really going on in the larger picture. Nor were/are the documentarians, but it's all true and all inspectable by the assiduous reader.

Don't expect anyone to make a documentary of that, though. Ever.

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