

Interview with Terry Rogers – Band Promoter for The Champion Hotel and Band Manager for bands including The Marching Girls, and The Ears

So, tell me about yourself and what your involvement with the Melbourne punk Scene was and the whole Champion Hotel thing.

I was in New Zealand after originally coming from Sydney when the punk thing hit. The NZ punk scene was fabulous, and it was better than anything here and I revelled in it. So, when I came over here **The Marching Girls** who were called **The Scavengers** and they were my favourite band.

Was that because they were from NZ or you just loved their sound?

Yeah, I loved their sound – they were just brilliant. They were terrific, they were everything I liked in music. I came over from NZ to Melbourne, and they were here and they changed their name to **Marching Girls**, and it wasn't working because they were punks and they were too aggressive. The whole scene was run by the agencies who only put on suburban barn stuff and Marching Girls were so good and I just couldn't believe that they were not getting gigs. I had a girlfriend at the time who was working in the local pub – **The Champion Hotel** as a topless barmaid, topless waitress because it was the only way that the publican could get people into the place because they had indigenous people who would start fights and steal things, so they could never get people into the place.

Fitzroy was a rough suburb back then...

I knew nothing about this. I lived up the road in Brunswick Street with the guys from the band – **Marching Girls** – and the girlfriend worked at the **Champion Hotel**. I went up to the publican and I said, "If I put in some lights and a PA can I run some bands here a couple of nights a week?" I just wanna hear them play and just see what happens. I knew nothing about the scene here, and they didn't either because they were with this upper-level management, and so we started it. On opening night, what happened was I put the Marching Girls on for four nights Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and I'd put any other band that wanted to come and play for nothing. If you wanna come up and have a go you gotta chip in for the PA so it cost me nothing, although I didn't make any money either and The Ears were the first band who came up.

Then all of a sudden, all of these bands came out of the woodworks – bands and musicians that are still with us today. So, I stumbled into it. Every other promoter, entrepreneur I met, they wouldn't touch the place, they wouldn't touch these bands, they certainly wouldn't play for nothing but there were a whole bunch of musicians that wanted to. They didn't care; they didn't have records. The first band I ever put on who had a record were **The Scientists**. They came over from Perth and for some unknown reason they chose to play there, only the once before they discovered that there was a lot more money they can make in bigger places. So, I stumbled into it and then I got better at it and I eventually moved up to **Kids in the Kitchen** and that's when I imploded.

Because by that stage the music business was too hard for me basically. I'm a musician, I did it because I'm a musician first and I loved the bands and loved their attitudes – a whole different attitude to anything I had ever seen before. With them came a whole bunch of other people – fashion people, photographers, younger people that were on the way and they gravitated towards

the better bands who interested them and all sorts of things. *Dogs In Space* was probably a good example of that and the fella that made that movie (**Richard Lowenstein**).

Yeah, he was in the scene, and I have got some good stories about him, but I have got some good stories about everybody

Yeah? Do tell (laughs)

Nah too many stories, I'll show you some pictures...

So, you came to Melbourne, you decided to that you would be the Marching Girls manager and you started putting on gigs at The Champion Hotel and it became the hub for Melbourne punk and post-punk music and the Little Bands scene also emerged out of there. So, what's your memory of the bands?

Well, it just started with whoever wanted to play. It was just anyone who wanted to play for next to nothing could do it. There were two other venues that **Dolores San Miguel** was running...and a fella named Simon were running the Market Hotel in Prahran? As bands got together, I tried to get them work somewhere else and found those other people – we all started to work together. And a band then, if they came to play for me, Simon or Dolores, would be guaranteed a job at The Market Hotel and a job at The Champion Hotel. We didn't go on about you got to be popular first, we just gave everybody a go. Musicians would come along and play, and they would say @Ive got this friend or girlfriend or brothers in this band@, you know. It's just amazing how many there were.

So, what was your take on the whole Little Bands scene?

The Little Band scene was just phenomenal I mean because up until punk, everything was like Pink Floyd and million dollars videos – everything cost heaps of money. Millions of dollars of promotion on it.

The Little Bands - A band would get their equipment together out of bits and pieces, in fact a lot of them did because they had no money, but they were electronically minded, they were entertaining and they had something to say musically even if no one else wanted to hear it (laughs). You go to a publican and say, "give me a job with my band", and they say, "what have you done, give me something to listen to", then you'd say, "fuck off!" But what the Little Bands did, because there were so many of them and some of them were in the **Primitive Calculators**, and a couple of the better types of bands, one member would go and take his girlfriend and her brother-in-law and they'd get up there and bang away on something. And the whole thing would be because you were from Primitive Calculators and other bands, people would be interested at least. And this included a whole bunch of bands. For me it was fabulous because I had a crowd every night because they were all the Little Bands people. Hardly anybody came to see them, but there were so many of them, and they drank beer, they had a good time, and it looked like we had something.

So, they were there to support each other really... Like, they were there to play, but because there were so many of them, it was like a decent sized crowd

That's right. And they would only play for like 10 or 15 minutes maximum. Which means you needed 10 of them to make a night, and of course as it built up and a couple of them were starting to sound quite good and they had fabulous names. **Thrush and The Cunts** was one, oh they were brilliant.

They revolutionised the way people played, and the people would come and see them. Once they get any sort of a crowd, that's when promoters would be interested in them and give them a go, and so that allowed a couple of them to break out.

And that was peculiar to North Fitzroy in fact that was talking about the North Fitzroy Beat and the Little Bands all came from there. When I moved over to St Kilda, we had a completely different set up of punk and I think that was when Fred Negro was involved. They were a lot more yobbo so you could say that the Little Bands were more arty, clever people, trippy people.

It's interesting that you say the St Kilda scene was more yobbo because I think that the Crystal Ballroom scene always saw themselves as being the elite crowd...

There were the Eastern suburbs cool in the punk thing. But in North Fitzroy where we all lived, we were there because it was cheap, because we had no money and family were a long way away and they didn't talk to us anyway and we were rough as guts. We all had bad reputations for stealing and causing mayhem and then St Kilda became a cheaper place to live as well. There were already musicians and artists who were living there, and they accepted punk so we would move there. But **The Ballroom**, the **Boys Next Door** and quite a few of the other bands, they were from the Eastern suburbs and art school, and they had parents who lived in Doncaster and that sort of thing. But that was great because you had to have all these different tribes. That's the whole point for the young people, they gotta have different perspective from that person over there even if they all liked the same thing. I loved it all, I thought it was all terrific and then The Crystal Ballroom and Laurie Richards, they came where I went and after doing my own thing for a while – I did **Macy's** in South Yarra.

Oh, so you booked bands at Macy's as well. What year are we talking about?

I had only done the Champion Hotel, because I had never done it before and didn't plan on doing it and wasn't doing it like an entrepreneur or something. I did it until I couldn't do it anymore. Publicans were pains in the ass, one day I thought that's it! I'm not doing it anymore – I don't want to do this.

We started in late '79# and went for eight months. All the dates in 1979 are in my paperwork, and the bands that played, their different names and their posters. Lots of photographs! And from The Champion then I thought "well now what am I going to do? I like getting free drinks, I like to be a part of it." I was 29 or 30 so I was too old to be a punk. They were nice to me, but they had no respect for people over 22! So, it was a difficult job being a promoter, but we all just helped each other, but they just like to go on about it because it was a part of the 'punk attitude'.

What did you do at Macy's?

At Macy's I went in with **Laurie Richards**, and he booked the big bands – The Angels and all those and I booked my night that I put on from the independent scene. **Kids in the Kitchen** – I gave them their first gig there, they played with a band I was managing called **An Affair**. An Affair came through that process as well, they were terrible and they sacked me and that night I went and sat in the band room of Kids in the Kitchen and said "I'm a manager guys. I don't know what it is, but whatever it is – you got it!" It was their first time on stage; first time they had done anything and they just took over. That's when I realised how much 'front' it all was. Not musicians so much, although they were

good musicians, terrific musicians, but by then I think that the main thrust of the real bad stuff was all over. But good ol' Freddy (negro) kept that up. Five or six years later he was doing the **Fuck Fucks** and **I Spit On Your Gravy** and he really opened up and really revitalised the thing and promoted it. He was always a good promoter. Whenever I booked his band, they were **The Editions**.

They played the first week at The Champion, they were one of the first ones. Fred was the drummer in The Editions, and as soon as I met him, I knew that this bloke was going to do something. Not that because he was a terrific musician but because he had this attitude, he would do anything to get on stage. He'd do all the posters; he'd take the photographs. He would do anything that the musicians thought they were too good for this kind of behaviour, he would do all of that. I knew he was going to get somewhere. And until this day, he still has that drive to present himself and that's what any artist wants to do is to present themselves. But the managers and the market wouldn't let them, but they couldn't stop Freddy. (**Note from Punk Journey - The Editions** were booked for their first gig by Terry Rogers at the Champion Hotel with **The Marching Girls**. The gig was so successful that The Editions were re-booked for the following Saturday with **The Ears**.)

What was managing The Marching Girls like?

They were terrific. The Marching Girls were actually managed by a big company because they were so big in NZ. Did you ever hear of a band in the 1960's called **Ray Columbus & the Invaders**? They were one of the first mod bands that ever came here – which is my era.

From where did they come?

From NZ. Ray Columbus did really well in England. It was a band where a couple of the members went into management and that's when I met up with them. They had done all these things, they had gotten contracts, record contracts where they never did anything about it. They got all this equipment and everything. And because the agencies wouldn't book any punk bands and they didn't get any work, so they just stopped, they went "we'll just catch up with it somewhere along the track." I said, "you know I don't wanna manage you because you are the managers. I just want you to play as regularly as I can get you gigs but I can't guarantee you any money." They said, "oh we need this much and we get paid this much." But I was like "they play for nothing or they don't play at all!" Because it might even catch on and then you will get your money, you know. So that was the arrangement with them. But as it turns out, a few months down the track. **Ronnie Wilson** the Bass player who reverted to his real name of **Brendan Perry** and him and **Lisa Gerard** (well I'm dropping names now) Went onto form **Dead Can Dance** and that was another education for me.

That was the type of musicians I was dealing with. And when all the rest were drunk and falling over, taking drugs and killing themselves, Ronnie worked in the kitchen after the gigs, and he would earn enough money to buy a reel-to-reel recorder and started recording himself. He'd lock himself away and he was obsessed. He was just brilliant. And that's when I just realised who the clever ones were. Mark Seymour was one. They had something about them that says they are here for the long haul.

I guess Nick Cave was one of those...

Absolutely. We know them now because of their longevity, but at the time they were just another person. Lisa Gerard – I thought she was terrible, she used to scream and squeal. She was in the Little Bands, and they had all these people like this, and they just made a cacophony of noise. But as it turned out – she's a brilliant musician. So that was the joy of it all. The Ears were terrific and Dogs in Space just shows exactly what the scene was like. Richard Lowenstein captured it perfectly.

So, you would have hung out with the guys from The Marching Girls, and you also lived with them. And then you would have hung out again with the members of The Ears.

Yeah, all the parties in Berry Street, the infamous Berry Street. As a manager, not like the managers now that swan around in the limo, I carried their equipment, put up their posters, I did all the artwork because...everything around the scene like graphic artists, and video photographers were expensive. You don't have cameras that you've got now that takes pictures of bands, you'd have to organise somebody with a good camera and then it would take three weeks to get the negatives and then they are terrible and what do you do about it now? I love technology now, but in 1983 that's all there was. The synthesisers and the equipment that they used, they had to make themselves, and it broke down all the time because they just couldn't afford the things that the big people had. That drove them! They were people who wanted to do it. It stopped after a while of course but unless you're good at it you get 3 to 4 years go of it, or you get bored, or the missus won't let you do it anymore because you had relationships and you had a child and being an outrageous punk rocker just sometimes doesn't work like that.

How long were you at Macy's for and did you book The Gong Show while you were there or did that come after, came a bit later?

That came later. Ah The Gong Show I remember that too.

Paul Elliot ran those nights...

Yeah, Paul Elliot, gee now you've taken me down the track a little bit more. In a few years, I think it was '83 after Kids in the Kitchen imploded and there were drug problems and I could hardly seem to get out of bed. And then I met Fed and I played harmonica. Fred wanted a harmonica player one day and we now tell the same story of how I gave him his first job and he gave me my first job in the band.

So what band was that?

It was **The Band Who Shot Liberty Vallance** and **The Gravybillies**, I was with them for a while – that's them up there (both looks at photos).

The Models were a big band at the time that I was running The Champion and doing all those things. They were big, they were terrific, they were the best. Laurie Richards had them at The Ballroom and they were stars of any shows. The never played at The Champion after that, they needed more money. And up to this day I know Sean Kelly well and we talk about it often because we all knew each other from then on, because we all had the same drug problems (laughs).

What were those drug problems?

Just stuff that you would do at the time – Anything – but I never liked heroin. That was probably the best thing at that time for anybody cause if you didn't take it then you were guaranteed to live. The ones who did take heroin – Nick Cave, Keith Richards and those people, have lived to become legends. Heroin taking seem to help them stay alive. That's the other thing – staying alive – was what we were doing! There was no money, we all lived on the dole, we stole food from everywhere...

From parties, from people's fridges?

Oh, you know about that? I didn't want to mention it. I'm kind of embarrassed about some of our behaviour.

I know, because Des told me that Sam Sajevska stole food from his fridge and that he stole spam or something (laughs – puts Des voice on) "I always remember Sam stealing my spam!" (both laugh) it's funny that he had even eaten spam...

Well, they stole from everybody else as well. We just had to live however we could, yeah very hand to mouth, but it added to the conviction and the playing you know. Like when those guys got up there and they were cranky, well they were cranky you know and you always felt the power of it! (They would be cranky because they were starving because they hadn't eaten in a day). And now you go and see the best act, and they are so smooth, you see them rehearsing and the video and the going over it and slowing it down and everything's got to be right and everything. Well, this wasn't anything like that.

That was the attitude...sometimes a musician can snarl like Sid Vicious. You got no idea what you got to snarl about mate! You got 8 million dollars, you're on fire, you got a sea of people lining up outside and girls want to root ya, you got nothing to complain about. But the people I knew, they did have something to complain about. No money was a major thing. To continue on with a music career you had to buy strings, you had to get photographs taken, you had to do posters, and all of these things cost money. As a manager, my job was to do this for them. So, I got a network of artists and photographers who would do it for nothing because they liked the band. I knew full well they weren't doing it for me, although I was the one who had to ask them. They loved doing it. So, I got stuff in there from Richard Lowenstein and a bunch of other photographers, people who are all now something and they were all part of it, and they did it for nothing because they liked the music, they supported it not because they liked me. It was the lifestyle. I wouldn't say they did it because they liked the band, because they would do it for all the bands. They liked the idea of independent music because no one else was support it.

So was it an exciting time because all this stuff was so new and it hadn't been done before, and so there was this real buzz and excitement in the air. So, there was The Champion Hotel, Macys then there was Kids in the Kitchen and then what happened after that? Was that pretty much it for you and the music collaboration of the live music scene, the end of you managing bands?

Yeah, the implosion, I realised that I really didn't like the people I had to deal with.

People like the Premiere Artists people?

Yeah. The people that ran the business. That's when I realised that I was a musician and what I had been doing all of this time was based on music, not on marketing and it burnt me out. But like I said, I had a go. I got up with Kids in the Kitchen and the way I lost them was horrendous too. As soon as the agencies realised that they were terrific and I was there, in the way, and I knew what I was doing – they sent a limo around to the 17 yr old boys' houses and took them out to lunch. They said we want to manage you, we're gonna make this video, we're gonna buy all these posters, equipment you need, anything you need, but we have to manage you, and you will have to get rid of Terry. Which they did just like that (clicks his fingers).

That's when it all crashed in and I realised that the 'business' wasn't for me. A couple of years later when I started playing the harmonica again, and I met Fred. That's when I wanted to get up there again and play. Let somebody else manage. Let somebody else do the shit work that I used to do. But the memories of The Champion and the good days were brilliant, even the bad days were brilliant.

Adrian Barker was running **Hearts** at the time. He was the only person in the industry, who worked for Nucleus that I actually liked, and he didn't rip anyone off. He was just a good bloke. He was trapped in the system like all of us were, but he really liked the bands. He couldn't do anything about it, but he really liked them. He showed it from then on and his career sort of went parallel to whatever went on. Adrian was always a good bloke.

But Adrian was with Nucleus and Premiere Artists, and they didn't like punk bands. The publicans wanted it. At Hearts. They were nibbling at it. That's why I got to know him. But Hearts had one of those machines that cuts the sounds off, you know, a noise limiter. So punk bands – no hope. You play there and every 3 minutes you get turned off so nobody wanted to play there, but you want to play for the agencies so you can get a job in the suburbs. But the publicans wouldn't touch our bands, they would say, "no no we don't like punk music."

So, the day that you walked in, did you realise that you would be a part of something that would be iconic film?

No.

I mean the film *Dogs in Space* shows The Champion Hotel as being the central hub of the Melbourne music scene, and that was something that you created.

Yeah. Totally unwittingly. I wanted to see The Marching Girls; I didn't know about the other bands. I didn't know about these people. In fact, in my opinion from there on as to why the other promoters didn't touch them, because you just wouldn't. If you had any sense at all you wouldn't. Something so unprofessional and so un-business like. The bands were completely un-business like, but I had to deal with them because I was the bit in the middle. Both the venues and the bands wanted bums on seats. They did want to be popular. Sometimes in independent music you don't go chasing your market, you just do it. People are gonna like it or they're not – you take your chances. Because I didn't have any preconceived ideas about a big crowd, I wasn't aiming for 500 people.

I just wanted to see these bands play cause every night, just like everybody else I wanted to go down the pub and see bands and have a beer with my mates. Then when you had to go to the suburban barns, get through security, deal with Idiots. Then see a band play for 15 minutes who have just made it up as they are going along anyway. You go and buy the record if you wanna hear anything and here was this punk thing. In NZ it was the same, as soon as I walked in, I was only 27 or something so I had been through a lot of music and all the major bands from the 1970s, heavy metal and Crème and all sorts of people, and I went to a punk gig, and oh it was like The Beatles all over again.

Not like the Beatles but my very first experience of music was in Sydney in Kings Cross, going downstairs in a dark room, full of smoke and all I could hear was the bass! I came from the suburbs, and this was 1963 or something and it was a revelation! I walked into punk and it was the same thing. Smoke-filled and bass-filled and everything was just a loud powerful blur – I loved it. I loved the people who did it and I realised that a lot of them did it because they could play guitar, some of them did it because they were just that cranky and pushy. Johnny Volume was in the Marching Girls – he played guitar so simply and it came out like Bang!

I love what you said – it was a “beautiful, chaotic blur”. So...you walked into this venue and created something iconic without realising it. How were the Little Bands? Did they approach you? How did it evolve that the Champions Hotel became the hub of the Little Bands scene?

Well firstly no one else would take them on. They would go and get a suburban hall somewhere and put on a private thing which involved security, police and councils and noise, all sorts of things, so a pub was the ideal thing. As I said all members of the Little Bands were in bands that had played at The Champion in their own right. One person for example was Stuart Grant from the Primitive Calculators. Because he was so good and he knew a lot of people – he could get a couple of people and say we will call ourselves this, we’re gonna do this, and then we’ll get these other people down the road and they all got themselves together and approached me as an ongoing thing. The North Fitzroy Beat – that was written by Alan Bamford. He basically discovered it and documented it. (looks through photos) here’s the first agency job I got for The Marching Girls – 24th February 1980 at The Kingston Hotel and we got \$50.

Oh \$50! That would have been a lot of money back then actually.

It was when you made nothing. Here’s the first single. I organised all this and this is my crappy artwork. This is the original and we ran off black and white copies because we couldn’t afford colour. Here’s one when we could afford colour. The Champion upstairs – Friday 25th January.

It’s too bad that nobody put years on things like flyers and posters...

Little Bands - Wednesday 21st of May - This was 1980. The Articles, Serious Young Insects, Laminex and The Jetsonnes who Mark Seymour was in. So, I managed The Ears and I have to put all these bands together. The Ears they were a good band, so we played with the Little Bands supporting us.

I tried to do the New Wave. The Scientists as I say they were the first big band (reads) “arrive before 830 and get two free beers.” You would do anything to get them in there! 21st of December – so that would have been ’79. (reads) ...The Marching Girls, The Ears and that would have been The Shots.

Oh, this would have been the last night - 29th March 1980, I went through the 8 months.

NYE at The Champions upstairs. Now **NYE 1979** was when I was competing with everybody, but I had The Primitive Calculators, Whirly Worlds and The Ears...and the debut of the Fizz Pops. We had a late license 8pm until 2.30am - 5 bands in a little room like that – it was fantastic.

It must have been a great night!

Definitely – it was cold when I first got there. It was called Beverly's, it was a restaurant and we didn't know what to call it. As soon as I knew it was the Champion Hotel I just called it **The Champions** – what a great name! So, we called it The Champion Hotel upstairs because they had all the trouble downstairs, and no one would come. There was the publican band who were going nowhere and doing nothing. Marching Girls and The Tension Nuts were the first bands to play. The Ears came and saw me and said, "We've got a band and we wanna play"- "Great! you can play with us this weekend." So, when I saw them of course, I booked them from then on. I told any band they could come and do what they want to do and they can have a go and we'll take it from there kind of thing. You could see which ones were any good.

My job as a manager was pretty dicey cause I couldn't pay anybody any money. I didn't make any money myself.

How were you living then?

Well on the dole. I lived just like musicians did. But of course, when money's short then friendships can fray you know what I mean? As a manager who takes 10% from the band or one member of the band would take the band's money and they would go and buy heroin. These things happened and they did happen. There's tension in the band when there's not much money...

(Reads) "Dear Terry enclosed is \$100 from Robert for the Fender speaker and \$70 for your help with the band – June 81". This is the year The Ears split up, and Cathy McQuade went one way, and Mick Lewis went the other way and they formed **Bear Garden**. Like all bands did in those days when you stop one band and start another and you bring in the new guitarist, then everybody gets the shifts. We didn't know at the time that it was natural that you moved on. They thought they were going to do this for ever... (continues reading) "The rest of the money I have no intentions of returning to the band who has such little loyalty and shows such capacity for deceit. I hope that you understand that I have nothing but respect and gratitude for you." (Ears band member).

Why did they say "deceit?" What happened there?

Oh, I don't know. I don't know. I never touched their money, but I did have a bill to pay and when this person left the band, they said "I want you to have this and I'm taking the rest then because I don't trust any of these people to look after it. I think this person was the smart one who kept everything together.

But Carl Manuell and his brother are absolutely terrific, and Mick Lewis was a really good friend. But none of them had any idea about money. And so, I had to explain to people why there's this cost and why people didn't get paid. Trust and respect - that's what I got paid.

So, you were Idle Management...I was meant to ask you about The Virgins. Do you remember The Virgins? Did they ever play at The Champion Hotel? Because they were the ones that would wreck

everything and they got banned from playing at every venue in town. Did you have a personal experience with them?

I can't remember. But if they did that, they were like any other band, because every band did that. The Marching Girls particularly were the worst. In the NZ punk scene, they were so much tougher and much rougher. It wasn't made up of middle-class people. The Scavengers made a name in NZ because every time they played, there was a death. A death like somebody would overdose or fall off a balcony, or get in a fight, or something. And in a punk scene, a death at every gig... you're going to get a reputation, aren't you?

The band wasn't violent, the crowd was...The punk scene crowd were made up of rough, under privileged people. They didn't have much going for them and in NZ there weren't any money, so it was always harder. Then they came over here and they weren't getting any work, and they were trying to maintain their musicality, and they weren't getting a go. Because I was living with them, I would listen to them practise in the lounge room, they had written all these songs, and they were fabulous songs, oh they were so good.

I think it was after three months or something that I put up with this and I just had to start The Champions, because I just wanted to hear them play. And Chris...came from over the road and he was one of the first ones in because he and his boyfriend lived in the house opposite. So, they came to the Champion, and they told a heap of people to come the Champion Hotel, even though it was rough, you could still go. We didn't have any trouble with security because we just let anybody in and as soon as they hear the noise anyway, they just left and that was the other good thing.

They were the normal Fitzroy crowd that started fights. They weren't going to hang around with those people. Everybody else had problem with the Champion except for me, it was unbelievable. I just didn't know. Like me footy team. I barrack for St Kilda now because I live here, I didn't know that they had never won one flag in 8 centuries of playing.

So, what kind of audience were you attracting for the Ears, Marching Girls and little band nights?

Their friends and people like them. Obviously, all this stuff came from art schools - RMIT, Sydney Uni, Caulfield Uni. Any artists slash musicians that had something to say and didn't have a forum to say it. They gravitated towards those people who were doing that. And the Little Bands that was something completely.... cause you didn't play an instrument; you didn't even have an instrument – they hit things. They just made it up as they were going along and it was just a creative mess and every so often you get a magic moment.

But the point was that it was a good night. Very early on in the piece I didn't have the luxury of an opinion of a band, because I saw all the other promoters doing that – like “no, I don't like you” and if you don't look good and you haven't got the right outfits...I would just say “You guys can come along and if you are prepared to put up with the scene and thrill people then I am a happy man- I don't care what you play like.” They would always come up and ask me for a critique afterwards and I was so nervous about critiquing them because it was so spontaneous that they were going to learn anyway. They were the musicians.

So, what would you say if they asked for a critique?

Tell them. Exactly whatever I thought as a member of the audience not as a promoter. That was the problem because I was the promoter, they would take heart with everything I said. So, I had to be very careful. But I still wanted to talk like my audience would talk to me. I wouldn't say anything like that come to think of it. I wouldn't criticise personally anybody because there were no criteria in the music. It wasn't a symphony orchestra; it wasn't a jazz band. They made it up as they went and what they presented was up to the crowd to like them. I would give them a go, and it was up to the crowd to like them, not me.

Oh, that's good. That's really honourable.

Yeah. That's probably what killed me; why I couldn't do it. Because I would probably be doing it today if I had been a bit more cutthroat. And you would probably find that in areas of business now where people are doing things and sometimes you just got to be a littler pushier you know to get where you wanna go?

Or you'd better learn to not to take no for an answer.

Yeah. The people who have stepped up to be better than the lot of them, they are not necessary that fantastic, but they just got that little more drive. They just got an opinion, and they wanted people to know about it. They're not forcing their opinions down people's throats, but they do want people to know about it, and that's what these musicians are doing. So, they may be terrible, but we are giving you the choice, not the radio stations, not the agencies, not the publican – we're giving the audience the choice of if they like us or not.