

Helen Marketti's Music Corner

It's Only Rock n Roll



Marc Zakarin is completely at home when discussing rock and roll memorabilia whether it is an artifact's history, origin and more importantly, its price. Marc and his wife, Deb have spent over forty years collecting, selling and bargaining with many of rock and roll's historical items.

"As a young guy, I was always into music," said Marc. "When I was in the sixth grade is when I attended my first concert. The line up was the famous DJ, Murray the K, Canibal and The Headhunters (Land of a Thousand Dances), The Shirelles plus Little Anthony and The Imperials."

"I'd have to say the Young Rascals were one of my favorite bands. I became friends over time with Gene Cornish (Young Rascals) who was the guitarist. I also do stand up comedy for a few rock bands. I have opened for Gene and his guitar band and also Southside Johnny and the Asbury Dukes. My routine includes stories about being at Woodstock, my wife Deb, the economy and so forth. It's a fun outlet. However, rock and roll collecting has always been number one."

Marc's attendance at Woodstock 69 made a life long impression. "My father wrote up a contract for my friends and I to sign. I was sixteen years old at the time. My father's contract stated that we cannot drive over 55 mph, we must wear our seatbelts, we will not pick up any hitchhikers and we will not drink beer. I then turned it into a joke and I had my own contract that my dad will not follow us or steal my broad." (laughs)

"As I was walking around at Woodstock, there was an outdoor market where people were selling tie dies, incense and other generic stuff. It was then that I got the idea that I could sell rock and roll items, promote a convention where bands could play, have



items autographed and make it similar to a Comic or Sci Fi convention," explains Marc. "My first rock and roll convention was in 1975 and Murray the K was my MC. My idea was to collect memorabilia that was anything but records. I was thinking more along the lines of toys, buttons, mugs, stickers, tour jackets and so forth. There is so much out there in rock and roll and it's also the one subject that is not totally traceable. There is more hidden memorabilia."

Marc discusses what rock and roll items are hot sellers. "Original posters are the most valuable item for collectors. Handwritten lyrics are another valuable item. Pricing for items can go from tens of thousands, to hundreds of thousands to millions depending on the artist and if they are alive or deceased. Items in their original packaging and in mint condition will double in value. For example, The Beatles 1966 Cleveland cardboard concert poster sold for \$38,309!"

It seems everyone is a music fan. "Sometimes I receive calls from celebrities or musicians because they are collectors of other



artists. Actor, Steven Seagul collects Jimi Hendrix guitars. Eddie Murphy has wanted to buy a Hendrix guitar," said Marc. "In one of my auctions I once had a film clip of Keith Richards (Rolling Stones) getting electrocuted. A young couple had filmed it on their Super 8 camera. The film clip sold for \$26,000. Keith called through a mutual friend and wanted a copy of the film clip. The doctors said that if it weren't for him wearing Hush Puppy Shoes he would have died. The shoes are what saved him. Whoever set up the equipment did not ground the microphone and the show ended up being cancelled."

He continues, "Some rock stars call me wanting their own memorabilia because they were not able to secure anything while being on the road or some did not have a clue what had been manufactured with their image until years later."

"One of the most unusual items I have come across is a car that Ringo Starr used in one of his TV Specials starring Carrie Fisher. It was a 1957 BelAir Coupe. George Barris designed the car. At the time, the car sold for \$26,000 but on today's market may easily go for \$100,000. It's all subjective because what's hot today may not be by tomorrow."

Marc shares his thoughts about who is the top seller. "The Beatles are THE number one seller in rock memorabilia. I wouldn't say that Elvis is number two although he is way up there. Hendrix items sell as does Led Zeppelin, Janis Joplin and the Rolling Stones. I once sold a flowered shirt that belonged to Jimi Hendrix for \$46,000. What made it sell was the photo identification. Whenever you have photo proof of an item it will sell better."

Marc and his wife, Deb acquires the items through word of mouth, advertisements, auctions, other dealers and recommendations. He and Deb enjoy the thrill of

the hunt. "I sold a Beatles at Shea Stadium poster for \$130,000. A Rolling Stones at Carnegie Hall poster sold for over \$50,000. The Doors signatures on a first management group contract went for nearly \$20,000. I sold Billy Joel's psychological tests that he did when he was a kid. One of the questions asked "What do you want to be when you grow up?" and Billy wrote, "Little Richard."

Today, Marc works for a couple of auction houses (Leland and Hakes). "We want to help people sell their memorabilia items. Search your attics, barns, closets and garages because you just might get rich!"

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