

KNOW WE'RE TALKIN

By Helen Marketti

Harvey Kubernik talks about his latest book, 1967, A Complete Rock Music History of the Summer of Love

2017 marks the 50th anniversary for the Summer of Love. What does that mean? In 1967, the youth of the time, or the counterculture as it was called, chose to identify with their own generation, rejecting the traditional roles of their parents, rebelling, protesting, attending be-ins, love-ins, expressing freedom, making their mark on life and in the history books. Harvey Kubernik provides readers with a rock history lesson in his latest book that sheds light on a new understanding of ALL that the Summer of Love embodied. Naturally, we gravitate towards the flower children, hippies and our first thoughts venture to Janis Joplin, Jefferson Airplane and The Grateful Dead. Those talented names barely scratch the surface. There are more participants during this turbulent time of change than most may realize.

"James Cushing once said to me, 'It's not nostalgia if it's new history'. I believe I am sharing new history and not reliving the same 60s mentality," said Harvey. "Motown and Stax Records were a big part of the 60s and the Summer of Love but they are barely mentioned in the history of that time nor mentioned at all. They are minimalized. Ed Sullivan is rarely mentioned for this time period, yet many of the bands during that era appeared on his show."

Harvey has written 12 books, numerous articles and currently writes a column in Record Collector Magazine. His published works are known for their depth of the subject matter and his individual slant for interviewing. "As a teenager growing up in Los Angeles I was reading the LA Free Press. Later I started reading Rolling Stone and alternative weeklies. From 1969 to 1971, I attended West LA Junior College. I worked at the school library for 18 months. I was part of the first class to attend that college. It was like a high school with ashtrays," he remembers. "I graduated from college in 1973 and was still figuring out what I wanted to do with my life."

"In 1972 at San Diego State which later became San Diego State University, I was instrumental in developing an accredited rock music studies course under Dr. James Wheeler. It might have been one of the first of its kind. I would

recommend Jim Morrison's poetry book, various record albums and so forth. Once the class got off the ground, I started receiving promotional albums from record companies and invited to see some shows at places such as The Whiskey A Go Go. Thankfully, I was turning 21 years old. My first real interview was with Brian Auger (jazz/rock keyboardist) which was published in the Los Angeles Free Press. Grelun Landon from RCA Records understood my passion for music history. He knew I was serious about documenting. He set me up with interviews. I have no aversion to interviewing musicians of any genre."

This remarkable new book with stunning images, quotes from the musicians who lived the era and Harvey's passion for documenting and sharing information is a must for every music enthusiast. "I am always interested in the process and the information. It's a hard gig because some of these people have done hundreds of interviews over the past 20 to 40 years. I have interviewed many of them over my career. It's easy to run into the trap of delving into what is already familiar territory. I have to work harder to come up with questions and arenas to navigate the expedition together. Every page can knock you on your head. I feel the text, sidebars and quotes are magnetic. I am not going to create a book that reads like a fanzine. I took the narrative into an entirely different dimension. I still have the enthusiasm of a researcher," he explains.

What have we learned from classic rock artists? "They are now in their 70s. The goal objective is to do your craft for half of a century. That is what is important. You need to honor and respect the people who have put 50 plus years into their music. These older groups still need to be heard," said Harvey. "People were very quick to dismiss the music of the 60s and 70s when New Wave and Punk Rock showed up. I never left the original people behind but it's important to embrace the new voices, too."

Harvey faithfully watched the television show, UPBEAT broadcast from Cleveland. "I lived in LA and looked forward to watching UPBEAT," he said. "It was a time when television ushered in new artists. I



watched UPBEAT every week. I loved it. I remember Don Webster was the host. During the Summer of Love, UPBEAT was still giving us Gene Pitney and Otis Redding. It is obvious what the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame means to the people of Cleveland beyond being a tourist destination."

Harvey shares some lasting thoughts about the Summer of Love and his recent book, "First of all, it's an income stream. I am not going to hide that reality. It was a job for me to write the book but once you have that job you then work hard to influence other people. If I can turn one person on to Surrealistic Pillow by Jefferson Airplane or interest them in checking

out the first album of Big Brother and The Holding Company then those are some of the significant reasons for my book. I am reminding or more importantly introducing talents, recordings and events to new people. For the older audience, it's an opportunity for them to reinvestigate and recharge from what they heard as teenagers. The impact of 1967 continues."

1967, A Complete Rock Music History of the Summer of Love (Sterling 2017) is available in most bookstores and Amazon.

Harvey's blog: www.otherworldcotageindustries.com



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