

WOODSTOCK '69 turns 40



By Helen Marketti

Time Magazine said it was the greatest, peaceful event of all time. A seemingly endless stream of people seeking peace, love, acceptance and great music found their way to Bethel, New York. It was August of 1969 and for an entire weekend there were an estimated 500,000 people who settled on Max Yasgur's 600 acre dairy farm for a historic musical event.

"We need to treat people better. If you're holding the spirit of the light in your heart then you can love your neighbor better. People wanted their personal freedom guaranteed and they weren't getting it. It was a demonstration through a peaceful event," explains Artie.

Known as "The Father of Woodstock" Artie Kornfeld was one of the creators for the original Woodstock Music & Art Fair that took place forty years ago this month. Like all great music stories there is a beginning to the magic.

Living in North Carolina when he was thirteen Artie worked at the Charlotte Coliseum carrying buckets of ice and soda

bottles for thirsty customers. "Those buckets were heavy plus I had to carry them up and down the steps which were very steep. It was hard work," said Artie. "I worked there so I could see the acts for free. I saw Buddy Holly. I saw all the greats of that time."

Artie continues, "There was a lot of hatred back then-so much discrimination. My father was a very kind and good man who once brought home a drunk black man one night so he could sleep it off. The next morning I walk into the kitchen and here is Fats Domino having coffee! That's who my father brought home."

Seeing one of the greats in his own home ignited the spark for Artie that would remain throughout his music experiences which is an ongoing list of being song writer, producer, promoter, manager, director, consultant, executive and author.

Artie has held the position of A & R Senior Director of Mercury Records and Vice President of Roulette Records during the 1960s. He was also Vice President & Director at Capitol Records before leaving

that position to work on Woodstock.

He has been a song writing partner

with many artists having collaborated on hundreds of songs.

"It's great to have cracked the inner circle whether it was writing or touring. I can pick up a guitar and have a song in two minutes. The most fun for me was writing," said Artie. "If you have a talent at something then it's your job to share it with the rest of the world. If you don't enjoy yourself with sharing your gifts then people you want to reach won't get anything out of what you're doing."

Artie's hard work and skills with various positions in the music industry has earned him over 100 Gold & Platinum discs and over 75 Billboard charted songs in over 150 albums.

Being immersed in the music industry at

a young age with unique experiences around many great artists planted seeds for new concepts and creative ideas to emerge. The spark ignited one evening as the "what if..." question became a reality.

The idea of Woodstock came during a conversation among like-minded friends who thought it would be an incredible experience to have an event that included arts and crafts with as many cool acts as they could imagine performing and there would be no charge. A free concert!

So with the idea now hatched the wheels were set in motion to find the ways and means to make it happen. A growing list of who's who in rock would agree to perform and set the music world in a new direction and mark history during this three day event. Among the artists who took the stage were: The Band, Canned Heat, Sly and the Family Stone, Jimi Hendrix, Creedence Clearwater Revival, The Grateful Dead, Ravi Shankar, The Who and many more.

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Even while it was happening Artie knew it was something special that would make its mark years from then as well. He was responsible for having Woodstock filmed and documented by cinematographer Michael Wadleigh. The film received an Academy Award in 1971 for Documentary Feature. "The movie is what made Woodstock history. Woodstock will still go on and what it stood for even after its forty years. It shows that it's never too late to make a difference," Artie explains. "I was raised to share and that is what I am doing. I use the power that God gave me to spread the light. The universe is the light that guides us. I always answer the same questions with the same answers because it's the truth and the truth doesn't change. I try to walk like I talk. I have a responsibility to it."

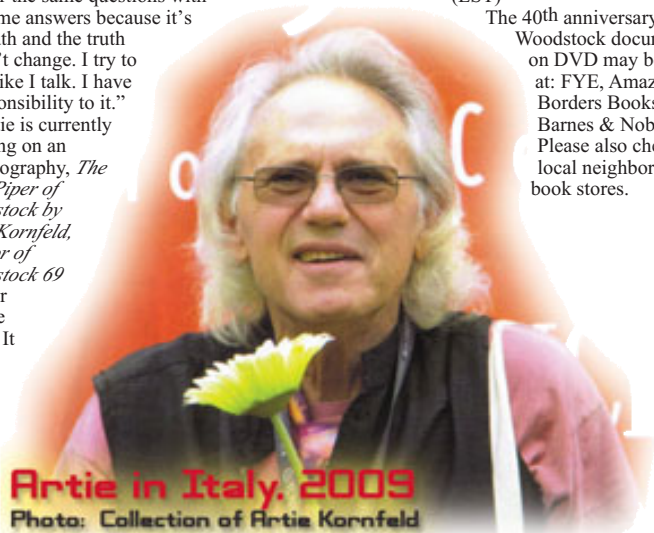
Artie is currently working on an autobiography, *The Pied Piper of Woodstock* by Artie Kornfeld, creator of *Woodstock 69* due for release soon. It is a story about his life,

inside stories about some of rock's most famous as well as the birth and life of Woodstock. Forward by Academy Award winning producer of the Woodstock movie and new DVD, Michael Wadleigh.

To learn more about Artie Kornfeld and Woodstock please visit: www.artiekornfeld-woodstock.com and www.myspace.com/woodstock40th

Radio Show: www.artistfirst.com
This is the home of Artie Kornfeld's Spirit of the Woodstock Nation. Artie interviews guest stars on Tuesday evenings at 10:00 pm (EST)

The 40th anniversary of Woodstock documentary on DVD may be found at: FYE, Amazon.com, Borders Books and Barnes & Noble. Please also check your local neighborhood book stores.



Artie in Italy, 2009
Photo: Collection of Artie Kornfeld

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