

PETER LEWIS ~ THE REBEL HANGS TEN IN HOLLYWOOD

You know Peter Lewis. He's the dapper guy in the upper left-hand corner of that first Moby Grape sleeve, set apart from the rest of the band by those Warren Beatty/Jan Berry/Mark Lindsay good looks Hollywood is always scrambling after. And he's the man who penned the stunning "Fall On You" from the Grape's classic first album. Lewis stuck it out through all the peaks and the valleys, the backbiting and the personnel changes of a band that, over the years, has become synonymous with the label *unrealised potential*. As Marlon Brando says, in *On The Waterfront*, they "coulda been a contender." Hell, they could have been champ.

Lewis resides now in the tiny Danish town of Solvang, halfway down the California coast between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Comfortably settled into an upmarket tract home on the outskirts of this little gingerbread encrusted village — whose main appeal seems to lie in its windmills and tourist-clogged gift shops — Lewis seems at peace with his legend, and with that of his former band. He'll theorise for hours with the zeal of a graduate student on just about any topic, but his eyes shine brightest when he gets going on the Grape, past, present and (possibly) future. And how it all fits into the big picture.

Raised in Beverly Hills by his mother, legendary film goddess and Academy Award winner, Loretta Young (Best Actress for 1947's *The Farmer's Daughter* with Joseph Cotten) and his dad, screenwriter Tom Lewis, Peter admits at one time he "had it all." His birthright, however, never stopped him from seeking his own path. "My experience in life has been starting out on top and then walking downhill," he muses. His older sister, Judy, recently published her autobiography, *Uncommon Knowledge*, publicly revealing what Hollywood insiders have known for years, that she was fathered by Clark Gable while he and Young worked on a film together.

It's probably not surprising that Peter wound up in what one would loosely refer to as the entertainment business. What's noteworthy is that he would gravitate to San Francisco — home of "the new generation with a new explanation" and always fiercely anti-Hollywood — to prove himself in a musical crucible where his background meant nothing. Rambling and contorted enough to occupy a volume of this magazine by itself, the Peter Lewis saga comes in two instalments. As they still say in Tinsel Town, "Always leave 'em begging for more."

PT: What was your childhood like, Peter, growing up as the son of a famous film star?

PL: It was good until I was about eleven. It was like paradise. We lived in a place called Doheny Ranch, 365 acres in the middle of Beverly Hills before it was all developed.

Did you go down to the studio to watch your mom making movies?

Yeah, sure. But it took me a long time to figure out she was a movie star. When I was in military school, in the fourth grade (age nine) somebody asked me, "Is your mother Loretta Young?" and I said, "Yeah." Then they started treatin' you different, but before that kids don't care. We went to school with Michael Reagan (son of Ronald) and Mia Farrow's brother. It's funny, y'know. It's not like you did anything to deserve that. The way a kid interprets it, it's almost like there's something wrong with you. A lot of people say, "You had everything," and in a sense we did. But when I was eleven my parents got divorced, and my dad took my brother Chris and me to live in New York.

We had been going to a military school that was too difficult for me. I was the kid who wanted to compete and be involved, but at that point we'd already been to nine different schools. And now there's this tremendous upheaval in the family.

How did you cope with New York?

There were seven kids in my class in the school I was going to, and they'd been taking Latin and French since the first grade. And I had a panic response to it. Because I'd always been the new kid, I could hang in there. Academically I was pretty good. But here I had one hand tied behind my back. I didn't understand these foreign languages, so I started freaking out, and it built up inside me. The next day I went completely nuts and ran out of the classroom into the streets of New York City. I had a nervous breakdown, this really profound thing. I spent that night in Grand Central Station. The next morning I found my way back to my dad's apartment. They found me on the roof, trying to get up enough guts to jump off.

What did they do with you?

My dad didn't know what to do. He'd taken a job as a vice president of an advertising agency, so he was always busy. He turned me over to this behavioral psychologist who wanted to put me in a mental ward. He told me, "This is where you stay until you go to school." They didn't care if you were well. They just wanted you to behave. That's what it was like back then. If you let the ghouls through the gate, you had to be whipped back into shape. They tricked me into going to the psychiatric hospital by telling me I was getting a physical exam. And when I got there they shot me full of Thorazine and locked me up until I promised to go to school. I was completely screwed up. Every day you had to go to this place for work therapy, making little plastic ropes.

God, that sounds like something out of Dickens. How did you survive?

There was a guitar in there, and I grabbed that. And they had a TV in there too, and that's where I saw Ricky Nelson for the first time on the *Ozzie and Harriet Show* every week. I hooked onto Ricky Nelson. I hated this place, but I learned that if I just held onto the guitar people would stay away from me because I'd look occupied. In a weird way that whole experience was responsible for me starting to play the guitar. Ricky Nelson gave me this thing: "I want to be like that guy." And I latched onto it.

How long did you spend in that place?

I managed to talk my way out of it after a while. Two years later my mom came through New York — I was thirteen now — and asked my brother and me if we wanted to go to Hawaii with her for a vacation. My parents were fighting over us. I went with her, and my brother didn't. When we got to Hawaii, Ricky Nelson was there to do a show. My mom knew that the Nelsons were staying in the same hotel as us. So that night I got to sit between Ozzie and Harriet to watch Ricky play. Two years earlier I'd been watching the guy in a mental ward, and now I'd met him.

Did you see him much during his Stone Canyon Band days in the 1970's? I thought they were great live.

I went to see him again, after Moby Grape, at the Palamino (a mostly C&W club in LA's San Fernando Valley). His roadie saw me wandering around and said, "Peter, does Ricky know you're here?" And I said, "No, I didn't even know if he'd remember me." So I went backstage, and it was cool because he knew about Moby Grape and really liked the band. He knew I was a really big fan, and then he liked what I did — a real cool thing. I heard stuff later, because I used to go out with Kris Harmon, his wife, before she married him. After he died she told me they had problems with drugs, but everybody did back then.

Even though he wasn't much older than the guys in Moby Grape, Ricky seemed to come from a different era.

Yeah, he was a product of the 50's. The 60's was more like when the musicians themselves, not the stars, took over, and they were street people with a different mentality. They were tougher, in a sense. The thought that Ricky really liked the 60's stuff and really wanted to write again, and that he thought that drugs were a necessary part of it was sad. That's what got him. He had everything.

So, what happened to you after your mom brought you back from Hawaii?

I stayed with her in Los Angeles. The New York thing was always too highbrow for me. For some reason my brother was always better at that sort of thing. I had my own thing in California, and there had always been a lot of sibling rivalry with Chris who's eleven months older than me. My first year at Loyola high school I met up with the son of one of the guys from the original, radio version of *Amos 'n' Andy*, Charlie Correll — same name as his dad. He lived in Beverly Hills. I was a sort of semi-juvenile delinquent type guy. I ran away. They caught me in Las Vegas once at age thirteen. I was disturbed. Before New York I'd been into sports, a real straight shooter. But that thing about my mom doing the TV show every week with my dad — it was just too much incoming energy, and it just blew the thing apart. Although I talked my way out of it, I never really recovered from that New York place. The kids ridiculed you back in school, just like before, but now you're more afraid to do anything that'll get you put back in the mental ward.

Had you seen the film *Rebel Without A Cause* at the time? It sounds similar to the plight of James Dean.

Yeah, I guess I just needed attention, so I did things like run away. The cops would throw me in juvenile hall, and my mom would leave me there for a couple of weeks. So, when I met Charlie Correll, my first year at Loyola, he took me over on a Saturday night to where he was playing with (television game host) Art Linkletter's son, Bob. And it was Bob who got me into the electric guitar. Bob died later in a car accident.

This, I take it, was the birth of the Cornells, your surf band?

Yeah, but we didn't call it that at first. We started off as the Tornados, but then we heard about those guys who'd done "Telstar." We were doing Duane Eddy and Johnny & the Hurricanes material. I was just learning how to play the guitar, and Link (Bob) showed me some stuff. He had

built his own electric guitar. He was very inventive. It had a shitty action, but he let me play it. Then we got some of their friends — guys who also went to Black Fox Military Academy — Jim O'Keefe on tenor sax and Tom Crumplar on bass, and we had a band. Somehow we learned enough stuff so we could go play, like at schools. We must have played every weekend for four years. Back then you could do that if you wanted. Our first gig was at the Westlake School For Girls, which I thought was pretty cool, because that's where Candy Bergen went. I'd met her that summer in Hawaii and been dating her off and on. She was only thirteen, but even then she was so beautiful.

You actually cut an album in 1963 for Garex Records. How did that come about?

We had a manager, Steve Jahns, and he took care of that deal. He was also the one who came up with the name, the Cornells. We'd always make fun of ourselves, and we wanted a *corny* name. We made up those song titles on the album as we went (laughs) — "Stompin' After Five." Nobody paid any attention to that. When it was time to do the next song, we'd just think it up right there and do it. It was all done in three days. Nobody sang. There were lots of bands in those days where nobody sang. When the British Invasion stuff hit the next year, it was like going from silent movies to talkies. My mom did that, and so did I. She started (in films) when she was five — *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* with Lon Chaney.

Where did your mom come from, since practically nobody back then was a native Californian?

They came from Salt Lake City. They had some problem with their grandfather, Earl Young. Somehow he was an unfaithful guy, and he left. So my grandmother and her three daughters and one son, Jack Lindley, who's David Lindley's father, by the way — so David's my cousin — they all moved to LA and used the grandfather as this whipping boy, the reason to carry on, that they weren't going to be destroyed by this thing. My grandmother's brother was an accountant in a movie studio, and my mom and my aunts, because they didn't have any money, would go over to the film lot and just stand around as extras. There was a more important part available, so they called my older aunt. But my mom, who's real aggressive, answered the phone and said, "Let me do it." (Silent film leading lady) Mae Murray was in the scene, and my mom ingratiated herself with her. So my grandmother even let my mom go stay with Mae Murray — in those days rich people would do that, kind of like in the musical "Annie." My mom soaked it all up like a sponge. She saw what it was like to behave like a movie star and sort of put it on like a coat and wore it for the rest of her life.

And she always had the looks for the part.

Well, she made herself look like that. She had buck teeth, but she had this rational metaphysical thing. Nothing from the outside was gonna get my mom. She has this idea how things work and believes in it with a faith beyond reason. I see my mom all the time. Of course, now that my sister's book has come out, she's really pissed off about it. But secretly she's really enjoying it. She calls up and says, "It makes me sick." But she's really savouring the whole thing.

So, where did the Cornells play after the Cotillion balls and sock hops?

We played a lot at Gazzari's, which was definitely the least cool of the Sunset Strip clubs. And we did *I've Got A Secret* (panel quiz network television show) with Garry Moore back in New York. "What's your secret?" "We're all movie stars' sons." Then we did *The Les Crane Show*. By this time (1964) we were actually singing. I sang lead on "Sweets For My Sweet" and "Every Time You Walk In The Room." We had just got into the English thing. I was about to go to Purdue (University) because they had a professional pilots' program there. So Les Crane asked me after we did our songs, "Are you gonna do this for a living?" And I said, "No, I'm gonna go to school and be a pilot." Bob (Linkletter) got really pissed off at me for sayin' that. We were supposed to play Bob's dad's show the next week, *The Art Linkletter Show*, but after Bob got mad at me I don't know if they played it or not. He was really pissed off. I know that this book came out listing personnel for surf bands, and I'm not listed as one of those guys.

What was the music scene like in LA just before the Beatles hit? Did you ever go see (surf guitar pioneer) Dick Dale play?

We saw Dick Dale at the Rendezvous Ballroom in Balboa. And Dick was okay, but I always preferred Freddie King. To me, surf music was okay, but Freddie was funky. I used to hang around with Henry Vestine, who was in a blues band called Hial King and the Newports. I played lead with the Cornells, but I also hung around with these other musicians. There were two other surf bands in LA at that time that, along with the Cornells, were the top three: the Renegades and Mike Adams and the Red Jackets. But, really, surf music didn't impress me musically very much. I got some side gigs playing sessions for Jan and Dean at Gold Star Studios. They had some guys from the Guillotines there too. Jan could never really sing all that well, but they didn't really give a shit. They were just these good looking guys more into, like, being the coolest guys on the beach. Their attitude was, "Can you believe we get paid for doing this?"

Did the Cornells re-tool the concept enough to suit the British Invasion crowds, or did you just fold up your tent?

Our peak shows were opening at the Hollywood Bowl for (comedian) Soupy Sales and playing the LA Sports Arena with Bobby Freeman, the Coasters and Wayne Newton. But the band never really did call it quits. When I'd come home from Purdue, I just didn't think of calling those same guys. I guess, by then, I was looking for something more long-hair. I liked the Beatles and the Stones okay, but I didn't think there was anything there worth dedicating your life to. But the first time I saw the Byrds, at the Long Beach Arena, I couldn't stop focusing on the harmonies, the Dylan songs and *that sound*. Surf music was okay, but when I saw the Byrds, it was just like when Mr. Toad found the motor car.

PT: Okay, give me the dates for your folk/rock band, Peter and the Wolves.

PL: It was only for a year — 1965 through 1966. But that's when I met Johnny Barbata and Lee Michaels, while I was playing with Peter and the Wolves at Gazzari's — definitely the uncoolest club on the (Sunset) Strip. It was mostly people there with sharkskin suits and their hair slicked back, and you knew if you had long hair you had to be cool or they'd kick your ass. It was a different kind of place. A lot of the places Peter and the Wolves played were owned by these sub-mobsters, local enforcers. It was hard to get your money. But they were making the effort to get some of the people in

there who were hanging out at the Whisky and the Trip to see Love and the Byrds.

Was there an end to Peter and the Wolves, or did it just kind of peter out? (laughter).

Well, there was this band called the Joel Scott Hill Trio — He later wound up in the Burrito Brothers and Canned Heat — and Joel was as talented as Bob (Mosley) except he was a guitar player and a really good looking guy. And a really talented singer with that blues voice. He could play like BB King, but he looked like John Lennon. At this point the Joel Scott Hill trio was Joel, Bob Mosley and Johnny Barbata. Up in Sacramento the Trio ran into Lee Michaels, and Joel wanted to add Lee to the group, so Bob quit. He didn't want to play in a four-piece band, because they weren't making that much money anyway. So Bob started playing with these guys, the Frantics (with Jerry Miller and Don Stevenson) and finally wound up in Hollister (south of San Jose) playing acoustic guitar in this bar. Then Johnny Barbata and Lee Michaels came up to Gazzarri's to see Peter and the Wolves. They were looking for a folk/rock thing to add a different vibe to the Trio, and they'd heard we were pretty good.

Did you finally play with Joel Scott Hill?

I sat in for Joel one Sunday down at the Action with Johnny and Lee. And right after that Johnny got the job with the Turtles, and my drummer went with Joel Scott Hill. That's sort of what broke up Peter and the Wolves. I hadn't been really satisfied with it anyway, because I was starting to write songs, but nobody else was. I wrote "Fall On You" during that time, and we played it live with Peter and the Wolves. But I wanted to be a part of a band — not with me as the leader — just to be a part of something really bitchin'. That's what was cool about the sixties. It wasn't just one guy running the boat. Finally the drummer called me and told me that Joel wanted to play with me to get this folk/rock thing going. So they came over, but we didn't have a bass player. And Joel said, "I know this really great bass player, Bob Mosley, but he's nuts." And I said, "Well, shit man, nuts is happening."

Do you remember the first time you met Mosley?

I went to pick him up — he was flying in from Hollister — and I was looking around the bar in the LA airport, lookin' for some hippie guy, and all I could find was this guy in Bermuda shorts and sneakers with white socks, with a goatee and sunglasses and his hair combed back, looking like one of these tough guy musicians. And it was Bob. I had bell-bottoms and my hair was really long, and I was thinking, "We ain't gonna get along" (laughs). He got in my car, and he didn't say a goddamned thing. When we got halfway up to my house, he turns to me and says, "I can play like a motherfucker and sing anything up to high C. What the hell can you do?"

How was Mosley live? As good as advertised?

I'll never forget the first time I heard him. He sang "Big Boss Man." And his bass playing was just whatever he felt at the time. It was just this fuckin' noise. It wasn't Paul McCartney, y'know. And he was looking right at me, singing like I was "big boss man" and "you ain't so tough." I didn't know what to think of Bob. I just knew I had to find him a place to stay, because I didn't want him staying with me (laughs). You had the feeling that if you left your wife alone for five minutes he'd be fucking her in the bathroom (laughs). He was really unchained. That thing that he does, that *voice* comes from a certain place inside him. He had a lot of anger. He may be the toughest guy I ever met. I had a fight with him

one time. We were in a hotel room, and somebody was calling us to tell us it was time for the gig. And we were both wandering around with towels around us, after taking a shower. And Bob told the guy, "Call back in twenty minutes." And I told him, "Hey, man, we gotta go." So the phone rang again, and we both fought over the phone for about five minutes. It was really shitty. But he was so strong. Once he got a handle on you, it's over.

Were you guys doing psychedelics at this point?

Right about then we went up to some guy's place in the Hollywood hills to drop acid and see if we could write some cool music. First time for me, but I don't know about Bob. They had their own little scene, and they were superimposing me on their scene, and I felt like just an observer. Joel came up to me and told me, "Don't take any of that stuff, just let Bob and Ken (Dunbar, the drummer) take it, and we'll just check 'em out." Joel was like a real manipulator. He had this way of acting like a lion tamer, and Bob was the lion. Bob started getting high and getting confused, and Joel would lead him on. That's how Bob paid the price for not driving the boat. See, Bob wasn't aware of the Byrds or any of this folk/rock stuff. He was just this guy. So, just when Bob was the most fucked-up and the dawn started breaking, I started to play this Rickenbacker twelve-string. And I saw Bob latch onto it like a log to a guy that's drowning. And he just listened to this stuff he'd never heard before. The jangling got in there, and he started to sing, and it was like the Byrds, but with the blues on it. And that was "Bitter Wind." And that's when we realized we had this different thing. It was happening.

Who was next in the Grape's cast of characters to appear?

Ken Dunbar quit to play with Noony Rickett (in a later version of Love with Arthur Lee) so our other drummer came back, and he had met this guy Matthew Katz somehow, so he brought Matthew around. That's when Joel bailed, because Matthew wanted to sign us and Joel didn't like Matthew.

Uh-oh. Maybe Joel was right.

Well, he was and he wasn't, because we got on the map and Joel didn't. And we never formed that bloc like the Airplane did. They just closed ranks on the guy and he was out. They got Bill Graham and Matthew didn't fuck with the Airplane after that, or Bill Graham would have fuckin' killed him, or made it impossible for him to walk around. That's the way Bill Graham did business.

You mentioned that Matthew had a good side as well.

Yeah, well, the ambience he created, that you were already a star, because he had a couple of Jaguars, himself. I never knew how he made his money. But even then, he didn't really treat you like you were worth much. He tried to devalue you at the same time — buying cheap and selling high. And by the 60's that kind of usury was old hat. Nobody wanted to be managed by a guy like that any more. We're the band, we're making the music, so we're gonna decide. Matthew's main function at first was just as a way to get from LA to San Francisco. LA wasn't the place to put a band together at the time. It was too locked in. The Mamas and the Papas ran LA. But San Francisco was still wide open.

So it was Matthew who got up to San Francisco?

He asked us, "Do you want to go to San Francisco and put a band together?" So Bob and I went with the drummer, and Joel didn't go. When we got there we met Skippy (Spence) because he'd just left the Airplane to go with Matthew. And we played together and started halfway looking around for another guitar player, for some reason. I hadn't been playing lead. It's something you've got to do incessantly to be really good. And I hadn't been doing it because I got locked into the Byrds thing, which is sort of a lead thing, but it wasn't the kind of thing those guys were used to. Bob was used to a lead guitar like B. B. King — or Jerry Miller. I don't know if I was really into the extra guitar thing. At that point it wasn't like I was trying to mould the group musically, it was just knowing in my own guts that there was something big happening, and I wanted to be a part of it. It was the new values of the 60's to me: the whole being greater than the sum of the parts, and a willingness to go beyond the ego to get something great out of it. You could just hear it in a song like "Lay Down Your Weary Tune" by the Byrds. I mean, maybe they came from different backgrounds — and Moby Grape came from even more diverse backgrounds — but to put that aside and play music together, to some degree, they had the solution.

It didn't take you long to get the final lineup together.

For some reason Skippy and Bob didn't like the drummer, Bob Newkirk from Peter and the Wolves, and Bob said he knew this guy named Don Stevenson (from the Frantics) who could play drums. And that's how Jerry (Miller) got in there. Jerry came with Don when Don came to audition. Jerry jammed with us, and about half an hour into it we looked at each other and just went, "Fuck!" And we really liked each other. And two months after that we wound up getting the biggest contract Columbia'd ever given anybody. Not through Matthew Kates, either. We had already fired him. We couldn't play the Fillmore because he was our manager, and nobody liked the guy. He'd used all his credit up. He was an asshole, and it was anachronistic for him to be that way — He was real greedy — in the context of the 60's with people trying to be peaceful and love each other.

How did you give him the sack?

Matthew had arranged for us to play at this place in Sausalito called the Ark, which sort of became our club. Up until that point he'd been really cool, but that thing with the Airplane (his firing) was dogging him like an albatross. So I made the deal for us to play the Fillmore, because they wouldn't deal with Matthew.

All the local counter-culture icons came to see you at the Ark, didn't they?

The word got out really fast — because Skippy was in the band — that we were really good, and Jerry Garcia and Big Brother came around to see us. And that's the place I first met Neil Young and Steven Stills. They'd met Skip when he was in the Airplane, and the guy at the Ark pointed out me as being in the band. So I spent the afternoon trading songs with those guys. We had these two songs we were doing. One of them was (Stevenson/Miller number) "Murder In My Heart For The Judge" and the other was one of my songs called "Stop" (sings) "Can't stop/Can't you hear the music ringing in your ears."

So later when they came back to play the Avalon, Steven told me, "Hey man, we just cut this song, and when we were done we realized it was two of your songs stuck together." And ("For What It's Worth") was a combination of those two: "Stop" and "Murder In My Heart For The Judge." And "Mr.

Soul" was "Fall On You" put in E instead of A with a little bit of "Satisfaction" added to the lick. And it was really cool. The Springfield were really good at juggling things around. I just told 'em, "Who cares." It wasn't a case, like now, of "I'm gonna sue your ass." Some of my happiest memories of those days were of sitting around Mosley's apartment in Mill Valley with Steven and Neil and Richie (Furay), smokin' dope and playing each other our songs.

Did you foresee the problems the Springfield were to have with Neil coming and going so many times.

Well, yeah, but I did that too with Moby Grape. Neil and I were a lot alike. He and I hung around together a lot. I really loved him. And I saw this similarity in the way we were treated in our bands. Neil was like this rich kid, and the other guys were treating him like he didn't know shit because they were "street-wise." And they held it over him. The same way Moby Grape treated me.

How does Moby Grape as a collection of people seem to you after all these years?

It was a coalition of guys who were multi-talented, except for me. I mean, I hadn't written any songs yet. I could play guitar okay. I had this style of playing that fit because of the 60's folk thing. And Skippy was just like me, a talented kinda odd guy to make it sound like more than a club band. But those other three guys were really super musicians — hardened club musicians. And that's kinda what I'd done with Peter and the Wolves. You've gotta go out there and get your head banged around to be able to write "Fall On You." And then somehow "Sitting By The Window" shows up and then "He" and you document your life. But you don't write in a vacuum.

How was Skippy in those early days? No problems?

He was fine, man. No problems. He was just sort of this punk-ish, impish guy. But he was always real talented.

Why did you do the deal that haunts you to this day, signing away the Moby Grape name to Matthew Katz?

(Sighs) We'd signed this management deal with him already. Bob and Skippy had come up with the name, the punch-line to the joke, "What's eight tons, purple and floats in the sea?" Matthew was renting an apartment for Skippy and Bob on Sacramento Street for a lot of money, back then, two hundred and fifty dollars a month, which enabled Bob to stay there and do his thing. And he was taking care of Jerry and Don too. I didn't need it, because I had this insurance policy that gave me ten thousand dollars when I turned twenty one, so I could get out of Hollywood and not be Loretta Young's son any more, but Peter Lewis. And it was my money that kept the band from having to get other jobs to survive. But Matthew wasn't sensitive enough to see what was happening. You can't just barge in there or you're the one they're gonna get rid of. He was too much of a prima donna to be a manager. He didn't control himself well. At one point, when Matthew was out of the picture and we were playing the Matrix, Paul Rothchild — before he signed the Doors — came backstage and told us, "We want you on Elektra Records. Ill give you anything you want." They offered us fifty percent of the stock in the company. And that's the only label where we could have made it. But that started this feeding frenzy, all these labels after us. So they started calling Matthew instead of us, and that's

how he got back in the game. We loved the Byrds, and that's why we went with Columbia, the worst place for us. You can sink or swim, and it doesn't matter to them. They promised us they'd make every contract we had with Matthew unenforceable. But they couldn't do it.

Was ceding the band's name to him part of your original contract with Katz?

Matthew showed up one day at the Ark, I remember, with an addendum to the personal management contract which said that he was the guy who owned the name, and that he only needed it to do business on our behalf. But the threat was that if we didn't sign it, that was the end of his paying for the apartments. And we couldn't have gone on without that. There was an argument, but we signed it. Neil Young was sitting in the corner, with his head down, just playing his Gretsch. I think Neil knew, even then, that was the end. We had bought into this process that we should have known better than to buy into. Matthew brought the spirit of conflict into the band. He didn't want it to be an equal partnership. He wanted it all.

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