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Dear Andy:

I was going to keep this very short, but after I spoke with you tonight, my Muse took hold and out came the following Spheeris, et al vignettes. I am copying most of this letter and some of the enclosures to Johnny Pierce.

I met Spheeris in 1971, a few months after his first album was released on Columbia Records. I was 28 and Jimmie must have been around 21. Jimmie had been signed by Columbia President, Clive Davis, now President of Arista Records. Clive had also signed Janis Joplin & Big Brother and the Holding Company (immediately after 1967's "Summer of Love" and the first Monterey Pop Festival), Barbara Streisand, Loggins and Messina, later Neil Diamond and a host of other stellar pop artists of the mid-to-late 1960s.

Davis wound up being ousted by his Board and the new Columbia regime set about new-artist genocide by dumping many of Clive's projects. Spheeris was poised to become the next recipient of Davis'/Columbia's international promotional might. While there is more to this story, suffice to say that this is the reason Jimmie's fourth and last album for Columbia, "Ports of The Heart" was not released abroad. Jimmie was left to fend for himself after his Columbia contract was done.

The night we met, Isle of View was not yet charting and Spheeris was on the road promoting it to the radio stations and performing in small venues around the country. Jimmie was also heavily promoting his art in the nation's gay bars. "The Rusty Nail" was just off the corner of a busy intersection in Oklahoma City.

Not listed in the phone book and without a sign, only with good directions could one locate the source of the low “Thump,” “Thump,” Thump” classic “disco beat.” In the middle of a rutted dirt driveway, the familiar angled plate-glass windows of a circa 1955 Dairy Queen had been replaced with black plywood and the small rear kitchen area transformed into a wonderful little dance floor, with the tunes pumping from a Seeburg Model LP-1 jukebox and its large “Satellite Disco Speakers.”

Spheeris was later amused to learn that I had been the young Executive Assistant to the President of the Seeburg Corporation when this revolutionary stereo 45 & 33 1/3 RPM (little) LP jukebox was born; based on the popularity of “le Discotec craze” in France. While not exactly accurate, Spheeris thereafter laughingly often introduced me as “the queen who invented Disco!”

From the moment I walked in the door that night, I realized there was no escaping Spheeris’ magic, should one, for whatever reasons, be “chosen.” As I entered, a friend said, “Scott, there’s a famous Rock ‘n’ Roll star in here!” When I asked, “who?” my friend didn’t know his name, but he pointed to the 6’4” Spheeris, towering above the crowd with hair down to his butt. I went directly over and said, “I understand you’re a Rock star.” Spheeris, feigning humility (as he was very wont to do) nodded “yes.” Aside, you probably know Spheeris was often “mistaken” for Jesus Christ. The resemblance occasionally produced some quite remarkable and funny scenes.

I owned a rather interesting retail store in Oklahoma City. Mother’s Arts Decor, formerly Mother’s Rock Shop had evolved from (I am told) one of the best known head shops in the country. It was in a wonderful old high-ceiling circa 1930s brick building with dark-stained solid Oak floors and wonderful arched heavy plaster doorways. In the mid 1960s, we painted the entire two-story front and its 40’ canvas awning in 6” high-gloss red, white, and blue enamel stripes, matching the colors on the original “peace fingers” decal and bumper sticker.

By the time I had met Spheeris, Mother’s had evolved into a more sophisticated shop, albeit with a “sixties” sensibility in both the merchandise and the very free lifestyles of our staff. When the ecology movement coalesced, we sandblasted the red, white and blue down to the original brick and repainted the awning in the now classic green and white ecology stripes.

Mother's was selling imported Bamboo furniture, round chrome and glass aquarium coffee tables, stylish lamps, and expensive macramé plant hangers — replacing the Mexican fringe leather jackets, sandals, and sterling-silver jewelry, Indian tapestries and rugs, bamboo curtains, and all of the other stock-in-trade of the hippie era.

The antique wood and glass display cases, solid brass and green enamel barber's chair, and the brass cash register from the original head shop decor fit in well with the new image. All that remained of Mother's Rock Shop (besides an interesting local mystique), were a small, discrete, and more sophisticated "head" counter, and — painted on the exposed 50' outside brick wall — Mother's renown two-story ecology mural.

Near cartoon, gentle forest creatures frolicked in their primal home on the edge of a pastoral lake. The rainbow's end literally bubbled and frothed in the lake's very center, and the rainbow extended to infinity in the perpetually blue sky filled with billowing white Cumulus clouds and floating birds.

We added a narrow 20' x 10' cedar-floor greenhouse between the two buildings on our property, stocked with tropical plants shipped in from Hawai'i. The real surprise lay behind the North side of the narrow, high space — behind a heavy red native Oklahoma Stone wall. Nearly hidden, a wide opening in the small greenhouse opened onto a large cedar deck leading down and into a 40' square stone building, a former 1800s saddle and carriage shop.

Supported by 18" square timbers, half of the roof had been replaced with corrugated fiberglass greenhouse panels, and carved Italian clay and hand-thrown glazed pots were tastefully displayed in the dramatically lighted, arranged, pruned and nicely marked up, humid, lush, tropical-jungle setting.

It was not unusual to hear people actually gasp in surprise when they wandered into Mother's greenhouse, especially during the freezing Oklahoma winters. A small fountain in the low pink bromeliad and lush fern bordered fishpond provided the only audible sound, in stark contrast to the rush of busy city traffic just outside. Mother's sold a lot merchandise and blew a lot of minds.

The enormous second floor gallery with deep 5' x 8' wire-glass skylights had once housed the extensive pipe collection (hello Bernie Karp, wherever you are), and work by the so-called hippie artists who produced such famous posters as "Make Love, Not War," "Phi Crappa Zappa," etc. We also sold the posters by John Pietre, and Andy Warhol's "Factory;" Campbell Tomato Soup Can, Wet Coke-a-Cola Bottle Lid, Heinz Catsup Bottle, etc. Virtually all of the sophisticated artists of the Pop-Art period were represented. The gallery had also housed Mother's all-Rock record department — the original reason for the store's very existence.

Since the age of 18 and prior to opening Mother's, I had worked in the wholesale and promotion side of the recording industry. Employed by the Big State Distributing (Dallas and Houston), I "reped" over one-hundred (then) independent record labels including London, Deram, A & M, Motown, Atlantic, Vanguard, Chess/Checker/Cadet, Roulette, Kent, Scepter-Wand, Musicor, and on and on and on. The hits never stopped coming. I was young, I understood the music, I could get my records played on the radio, and I knew how to sell out the live venues.

I had opened Mother's after I realized that the old guard in the industry had absolutely no clue to the paradigm shift in contemporary music (and in society) taking place around them. While the rest of the world was dancing naked with flowers in our hair, over at Columbia Records, Ray Conniff and Mitch Miller were fox-trotting with the "mom and pop" record retailers on the Titanic. Opportunity had knocked on my door.

By the time Spheeris entered my life, the "big box" record stores (WhereHouse, Tower, etc.) had eaten my lunch in the retail record business and the second-floor of Mother's housed a gallery of inexpensive fine-art graphics and prints, with a picture framing department in a smaller adjacent room. This space had once housed Mother's waterbed display and hypnotic black-light poster display where customers laid back on the round heated waterbed and grooved on "Warrior Man," "Warrior Woman," "Afro Man & Woman," and the M. C. Esher and other psychedelic day-glo art of the period. "Trippy, man!"

Rochelle Hudson, "Roach" ("One For Roach" on Isle of View) was then on the road with Spheeris, and the three of us crossed from the Rusty Nail to a large paved, nearly empty supermarket parking lot across the street.

I remember Spheeris literally squealing as I opened the back door of my black 1947 Bentley for he and Roach to slide in.

Before they could move, the loud sound of the loud screeching of tires froze them flat in their tracks. As if in slow motion, a pristine 1960 white Cadillac Coupe Deville came sliding sideways directly toward us at a high rate of speed, finally lurching to a rude halt only inches away. Charlie had arrived. Unlike my two new friends, I was only mildly startled — because by then, I was well accustomed to Charlie's dramatic (and often loud) arrivals and departures.

Charlie had been my lover, and while our friendship endures until today, his shall we say, "somewhat erratic" behavior due to a seemingly inhuman capacity for drugs (taken in combinations and amounts that would have killed mere mortals) had by then caused our once very torrid relationship to devolve. Charlie's handsome, sculptured masculine face and impeccably groomed beard, his well-defined body, and his legendary sexual prowess and equipment were known to literally hundreds of heartbroken beautiful young men and women in several states. Having at least five children that he knew of by age 21, Charlie was known far and wide as "The Local Legend."

Without a doubt, Charlie possessed the most sensual, animalistic physical attraction I have ever seen, live, on or off the stage or silver screen. With a street fighting ability fueled by a seemingly inexhaustible external power, Charlie was a real "man's man." More than one anal-retentive red neck found himself in the emergency room, having made the grave error of calling Charlie or one of his friends, perchance in drag, "faggot."

Charlie, like Jimmie, commanded his own brand of magic. It was fascinating to observe Charlie stroll into a room, shake his thick, black mane of hair, and lock his coal-black hypnotic gaze on the most desirable. Often without even a "hello," Charlie's quivering prey quickly found themselves in the extremely firm clutches of "the most formidable fucking machine ever born," as Spheeris once opined. Few were wired for the likes of Charlie, and Spheeris was of course instantly besotted. As the saying goes, "Sometime you had better be careful for what you wish for.."

Before Charlie's grand entrance, we were leaving the Rusty Nail to get high and cruise down to Mother's. And so, with Charlie in tow, we continued on into the late night, the Lear-Jet 8-track booming away inside the great black Bentley with its dark windows. While Spheeris was probably not exactly certain as to what he had stumbled into, you might well imagine how much he relished the entire "scene" and understand why he from then on called me "Mother." He took one look at the greenhouse and of course immediately took off his clothes. He and Charlie soon disappeared into the dense jungle, "La, La, La, La, La."

My relationship with Spheeris would continue to evolve uninterrupted for 13 years. While their physical relationship eventually cooled a bit, Jimmie always inquired about Charlie whenever we spoke on the phone, and they had spent time together the week before Jimmie's death. I phoned Charlie about the current turn of events and gave him the website address. He too was very pleased to learn of your project.

I will write to you later about Spheeris' last visit to me and the final concert in Tulsa. That is a rather incredible story and I really want to take adequate time to put it all down. Also, if you want me to rewrite anything I send you for the general public's consumption, I can clean it up a bit.

I harbor only wonderful memories of my two years in L.A. after Jimmie's death. I had learned many things about myself and about the world from Spheeris, and I like to think that I somehow added to his life. During that last week, Jimmy was seducing me back into the business to help get the new album out and the tour together. He was not looking forward to dealing with Peter Udo and he had told me this. He knew that I had never even been to L.A., didn't want to, and was frightened at the very idea of it. Spheeris said, "Scott, you still don't understand. You're an artist. You understand the process. You'll do just fine in L.A." Much taken aback, all I can remember saying is, "Spheeris, don't condemn me to being an artist!"

And so, Spheeris gave me the inner security that carried me on to L.A., enabled me to see the band rehearsed, signed to William Morris, and have every label in town at least sniffing around them — and all in a mere 10 months. There, I learned about the creative side of the music business first

hand, and I discovered and perfected some of my own talents, and of course there is the great legacy of the wonderful music from that time.

Spheeris had been right. I had done “just fine in L.A.”

I was particularly attracted to the dark contrast of Paul and John Goodsall’s collaborations (Bonnie Brae Street, Hope Runs Free, Answers In The Rain, etc.). My personal favorite, in fact the song that finally got me interested enough to do the Magritte/Zoo Drive project, was “Terrible Rain.” It is the only cut on the “B” side of the enclosed tape of Spheeris, opening for the Moody Blues at Lakeland Florida. If you have not heard this, check out Paul’s voice and Goodsall’s awesome guitar work. John once told me his classic guitar intro was a homage to The Who. The song was about the Falkland War, so that would probably date it if you are interested, “Come on Maggie (Thatcher), give us the orders now...”

While on the subject of collaboration, I would tell you that Paul had struggled with his voice, never (at that time) quite finding his “money note(s). I was particularly concerned because while we could do it all live, I did not think his voice could hold up to the rigors of constant touring and I was encouraging him to work often with his voice coach. The industry was at that time looking for silly lightweight pop songs (witness Landau and Stacey Q) and so the revealed nature of Zoo Drive/Touch/Magritte (try pick a name) was not easily marketable. This was very problematic, because this band was *far* from being light pop.

When I first heard Allwaves and the magic combination of Paul Marcus’ and Delph’s voices, I immediately felt that Marcus should join as support and harmony backup singer for Paul. In my mind, their vocal combination would work perfectly with Paul’s entire Screen-Gems repertoire, giving us the pop stuff necessary for a deal (Screen-Gems is yet another story). My feeling was we could do more of what we wanted after. Marcus was all for it but Delph would simply not hear of it. Delph made it very clear that it was to be his moment in the spotlight, and his alone. While I never mentioned it again, I thought of it often.

Now, one might well consider the possibility of Screen-Gems remastering some of Paul’s stuff with backup vocals and additional instrumentation. I imagine that the masters are all still in their vaults.

One might pitch the notion to them with Allwaves. Stranger things have happened.

It is very pleasant, yet a bit strange to reflect on all of this; to realize that I was once privileged to work with some of the greatest musicians in the business. After first hearing them, the New Music Manager for William Morris, Kevin Scott observed, "My God, that may be the greatest Rock 'n' Roll band working in the world today!"

In regards to seeing the rest of Jimmie's albums remastered and released, if memory serves me, the enclosed review from Sounds Magazine was written by the (later) Entertainment Editor of the London Times, Mick Brown. If you want me to try and track him down, let me know. It might be interesting to begin to use Jimmie's website to fish for information such as, "Where is Mick Brown?" Also, I likely have entrée' to the founder and President Emeritus of Sony. He lives in Honolulu and is a friend of the Governor's. Let me know if you ever need me to kick the boys at Columbia around a bit. It might be arranged.

Also, if memory serves me, Jimmie had "discovered" a (then) unknown band. Spheeris thought them to be exceptional and told me during that last week he wanted the Red Hot Chile Peppers to open for him on the new album tour. Somehow I suspect they might have a personal interest in helping to see Jimmie's music out again. Try email from their website.

Also, while the relationship between Kenny Loggins and Jimmie was I think strained (another tale), Justin Hayward and the rest of the original Moody Blues might be of some help (tales & dirt another time). email from their Website?

Jimmie had such a strong following in the midwest for several reasons. His love of New Orleans and Peter living there often brought him to that amazing city. And, he always sold out in Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa because of his nearly annual appearances. I cannot remember the name of the wonderful 1940s 600-seat movie house in Tulsa, converted to a Rock 'n' Roll venue. Johnny Pierce may know. In any event, the promoter there would likely help (if he is still alive and around). Perhaps the website might be used to finesse this information as well. That was where Jimmie played his last concert and I can remember many photos being taken. As I

said earlier, I will write about Spheeris' most extraordinary last concert when I next have a bit of time. It was an especially magic evening and the crowd was screaming after five encores. It will be an easy write.

Please call on me if I can assist you in any way. While I am up to my ass in alligators here (the Governor is facing a most difficult November, 1998 election), if you want I would at least assist you guys in drafting press releases, etc. and perhaps tele-conference as needed about possible marketing strategy and options. I still have a few friends around the business.

Best regards and Aloha,



P.S. Some might say that my greatest contribution to the world was my extracting Spheeris from the clutches of Scientology. While I had put up with his trying to proselytize me, I had often told him, "I can't believe that you're buying into all that shit." This made him absolutely furious and he avoided me for a while. When he did finally decide to see me again, to pay his expenses, I booked him in Tulsa and into one other, smaller lounge gig in Oklahoma City (another great Spheeris tale). Late at night, driving back from Tulsa, I cracked the window and lit a joint. Spheeris watched me smoke for a few moments before accusing me of "maliciously tempting" him. I told him that I was doing no such thing and that I would be quite happy to stop the goddamn car and do my business outside if it would help him better deal with temptation. Grabbing the joint and taking a hit, he muttered, "Asshole." To me, the end of his infatuation with Scientology dates from that evening.

To explain Jimmie's flirtation with Scientology, I would tell you that Jimmy was then frolicking with Diana Hubbard, L. Ron's attractive red-headed daughter. L. Ron Hubbard was still running Scientology from his jazzed up freighter, cruising off the three-mile limit and out of range of the I.R.S. who were heavily after his butt. This was before his wife and her gang took over and left him out in the cold. As I said, I never felt that Spheeris was ever really "into all that shit." I think, for Spheeris, it was just all rather glamorous, mysterious and intriguing; hanging out with Hubbard, Jackson Browne and the other celebes that Scientology had by then seduced.

God knows Spheeris did like adulation and he was always an instant target for flattery. I always suspected that is how they "got him."

P.P.S. During that same drive from Tulsa, Spheeris was looking in the vanity mirror and whining, "Scott I feel just like an old, er, an old..." I said, "Frump, perhaps?" He glared at me and hissed, "Frump!?" We both laughed.

PERSONAL P.S. Andy, like you, I feel Paul Levine was (and likely still is) one of the most attractive men in the world. He had nearly everything save scruples and a conscience; handsome, charming personality, hung like a Texas mule, desirable young men flocking to his bed, etc. While I was too old for him, I was at first beguiled. Paul considered me stuffy, provincial and meddling, and while he would take my money to pay his rent and eat, he completely disdained my editorial comment about his work and he was always greatly embarrassed to introduce me as his manager. It was not a good experience for me.

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