

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

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Randy Tuten, May 2001

Michael Erlewine: What I really want to know, and I'm sure you've been asked a thousand times, is how did you get into it, where did you start? Your rep is that you have more chops than a lot of the artists. How did you get them?

Randy Tuten: Well, how I got started was I was just a fan of posters in general.

Michael Erlewine: Right. Where did that come from and from what age?

Randy Tuten: Well, from very early. I liked movie posters a lot. I was enthralled by movie posters, and then I started to see some art-type posters, and then I started seeing the rock and roll posters.

Michael Erlewine: What years are we talking about, I mean roughly.

Randy Tuten: We're talking about like, you know, late 50's early 60's. I just I like posters. In high school I used to ...

Michael Erlewine: And you're from like L.A. area, right?

Randy Tuten: Well, I was born in San Francisco. My mother and father moved down to L.A. in the late 50's.

Michael Erlewine: And your birthday is what?

Randy Tuten: September 28, 1946, in San Francisco.

Michael Erlewine: Ok then. Where did art come into your life? Even before posters, I mean were you drawing as a kid?

Randy Tuten: Well, I was drawing as a kid. I used to draw, just kid drawings.

Michael Erlewine: Cartoons or?

Randy Tuten: I really wouldn't call them cartoons. They were just like, you know, cars, and tanks, and boats, and that kind of stuff. You know, when you're a kid, you start... It's like Crayola drawing, very much like Crayola drawing. You draw the sun coming up, with the little beams coming out, and trees and birds,

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or you know, a tank battle or whatever it is, battleships, battle or trains, or whatever,

Just kid drawings and that transformed into... I used to hang out with my friends, and go to ice skating rinks or roller-skating, or whatever the social thing was... And I wouldn't literally partake in the social aspect or the physical thing. I would sit around and draw cartoons of my friends ... doing the thing.

Michael Erlewine: And this is what age now roughly? Is it high school yet or?

Randy Tuten: Probably junior high school, somewhere like that.

Michael Erlewine: And in high school, did you keep doing this?

Randy Tuten: In high school, I used to decorate people's binders and do car drawings. Actually, I was doing posters for friends that ran for political office in high school, you know, like class president or cheerleaders. They used to all run for the cheerleaders, and the student body would vote whomever they liked in, you know. And so I used to do posters and signs. Actually, in high school, I was a pretty bad student when it came to history and math, so my art teacher got me to do those signs for the history and math department, which got me passing grades in those subjects.

So I just kept on drawing. And I just kept doing that. Then I started listening to music and started noticing album covers and then, when the San Francisco scene came along, I started noticing...

Michael Erlewine: You were in San Francisco then?

Randy Tuten: Well, I used to come to San Francisco a lot.

Michael Erlewine: You were in L.A.

Randy Tuten: I was living in L.A., but I used to come up to San Francisco. I don't remember how old I was. You can figure it out.

Michael Erlewine: But you didn't paint cars like Mouse did, and flame jobs?

Randy Tuten: Not professionally, but I did like, for the fun of it. I would do a friends car, but that was later on.

Michael Erlewine: Do you know Mark Arminski? You probably know Mark.

Randy Tuten: I know Mark, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Mark is painting a truck that's in his garage. It's just incredible. It's the, whole thing, I mean not striping, but the whole thing is...

Randy Tuten: Yeah, the whole thing. Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: How did you get engaged in the 60's thing? What artists were of interest to you? I mean how did you get into it?

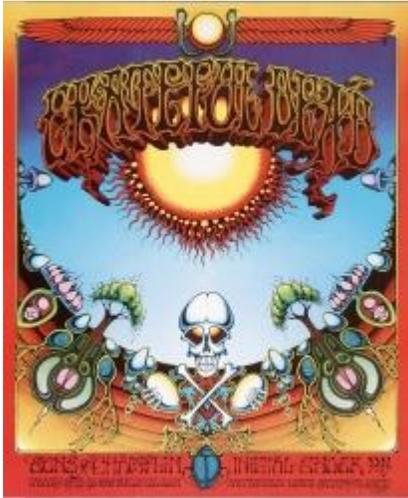
Randy Tuten: Obviously, Stanley Mouse, and Alton Kelley, and Rick Griffin had probably the most influence.

Michael Erlewine: And you met them, I mean early on?

Randy Tuten: I didn't meet them early. I met them later on, but I used to see Rick's stuff in the surfer magazine, cause I surfed in Southern California, when I was down there.

Michael Erlewine: Oh really, and what are some examples of the Rick's stuff that you personally like? What do you think is his best stuff? I mean people like the Aoxomoxoa?

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Rick Griffin's Aoxomoxoa

Randy Tuten: Yeah, Aoxomoxoa is beautiful, but the Aoxomoxoa poster from Hawaii is actually better, but you know always, each to his own. I mean Rick actually thought that the Jimmy Hendrix eyeball was an albatross around his neck, cause that's all people ever wanted to talk about.

!P CP005895 " Rick Griffin's Hawaii Aoxomoxoa"

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, very recognizable.

Randy Tuten: And so, they'd always want him to paint that or draw that.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: So, he always felt that was an albatross around his neck. But what pieces of Rick's did I think? All his stuff is great. The heart and torch in hand for Big Brother is incredible. I used to have that art work.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, that's wonderful.

Randy Tuten: But I traded it somewhere along the line.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, and so those guys influenced me, but there were record

cover things that... I mean I like some of the R&B boxing poster style stuff too, just the block lettering stuff. I always liked that stuff, so there's a vast array of poster designs you can apply to things.

Michael Erlewine: Did any of the artists take you under their wing? Who befriended you, if any?

Randy Tuten: Yeah. Nobody befriended me really.

Michael Erlewine: Was there a mentor among the group?

Randy Tuten: No. I mean I had a few mentors, but they were just all in my mind.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) Ok.

Randy Tuten: Certainly no one came along and helped me.

Michael Erlewine: Right, and did you ever become friendly, I mean, you met all of them eventually and

Randy Tuten: Well, I feel like I'm friends with Stanley Mouse and I was certainly friends with Rick Griffin and friends with Alton Kelley...

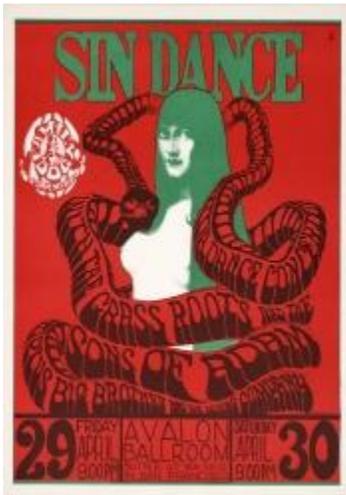
Michael Erlewine: What about Wes Wilson? Did you meet him? Did you get along with him?

Randy Tuten: I got along with him Ok. I was never really a big fan of Wes' work. I liked a lot of his stuff and his best pieces I think are the Paul Butterfield Blues Band with the hand on the head. And the Lenny Bruce, I think, is a just a really incredible design and there was something...oh, the "Sin Dance."

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Butterfield Blues Band FD-003



Sin Dance FD-006

You know there's certain pieces that are more commercial. You know Wes always liked his paintings, always thought his paintings were the best thing about him. I always thought his paintings were lackluster, compared to some of the posters that he designed. Yeah, I like a lot of his posters.

Michael Erlewine: How did you get out of the scene? You did a lot with Bill Graham, but you didn't do much with Chet Helms. Is that right?

Randy Tuten: Well, you know, when I first came back to San Francisco, in

January of 1967, on a permanent basis, I tried to work for the Family Dog for a year. This is kind of a known story; it's been published before. Jaxon, who was the art director of the Family Dog at the time, a cartoonist guy, and an artist in his own right, was the art director there and I always tried to work for them for a year, and they just constantly rejected my efforts.

Michael Erlewine: And you were doing your kind of stuff then?

Randy Tuten: It really wasn't my kinda' stuff. It was just like a mish-mosh, I would describe myself as a mish-mosh of different successful styles over the years.

Michael Erlewine: You're very flexible.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, whether it be like when you when you want to use a graphic woman on a poster. It's hard to beat a Vargas-type-looking girl. You know, that's just some gorgeous looking stuff. And so I would certainly use a Vargas type style to depict a woman.

Michael Erlewine: No, you're very good. One of the things that I learned putting my database together is when I finally got all these images and I was ready to sort them, and I'd never been able to see a whole groups of things and then I went through your group of things and I was saying " Wow I didn't realize how many different styles that you did, like superb work in. it's just that's 'that' style and that's really good. So I don't think anyone else has as many style as you've done, to my knowledge.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, the thing that I really like the most is lettering,

Michael Erlewine: Really?

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Randy Tuten: That's really what I like. A lot of the times people will be after me to do a poster for them, for no particular thing, just a poster, a nice looking poster. Well, I have a difficulty doing just a nice looking poster, because it's not an advertising thing. I always felt that I was an advertising artist.

Michael Erlewine: Right, and what was your particular interest in letters? What type of letters do you lean toward?

Randy Tuten: There's not any one particular type of lettering that I lean toward... whatever looks good. Whether it be a western style or psychedelic style or exploding lettering or melting lettering or whatever works on the poster.

Michael Erlewine: What venues are you doing things for now? I know you've kept busy. You're stuff still just keeps appearing.

Randy Tuten: Well, I'm working for the Rolling Rock people, back in Pennsylvania now. I'm doing a lot of album covers, I still work for the Grateful Dead occasionally. I still occasionally do some stuff for Bill Graham, but when they SFX people bought the Bill Graham company, that, along with Bill's death, kind of changed everything.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I think so,

Randy Tuten: Not immediately, but certainly...

Michael Erlewine: They bought up everything in our area as well. What are the areas that you feel have never been covered about your life, your art, you know when people... I know that interviews have been done and stuff. I've read some material on you. What stuff do you feel is not covered and you know what questions should I be asking

that I'm not? I don't know you as well as some of the other artists.

Randy Tuten: I wouldn't know how to answer that right off the bat here. What things about me are not known, is what you're saying?

Michael Erlewine: Yeah or ought to be more out, better understood?

Randy Tuten: Well, you know, for a long time I always felt that artists that were painters or poets, that kind of stuff was kind of like a cerebral side of the art world, and that I really viewed the commercial advertising side as a different side of the art world. But over the years, a number of people have changed my opinion about that.

Michael Erlewine: I mean like how do you feel now?

Randy Tuten: It's Ok for other people to call me an artist, but I've never felt like I was an artist myself.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, part of my function I hope is to help people to understand, you know. We talked about the memorabilia art before. Memorabilia's been covered. It's not like I deny that. I think that a lot of the stuff is more affordable; affordable, appreciable, collectable art, that you know, as far as I'm concerned is dirt-cheap. Just from the collector's point of view.

Randy Tuten: I guess what I'd have to say about that is I've never felt like that I was someone who did collectable stuff. I'm someone that does advertising, a commercial artist, if you will.

It's like the things I work on are fairly selective. Obviously, you don't see me doing stuff for a lot of punk bands or you know new-wave music, just cause I

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don't feel that comfortable around them. Not that there's anything wrong with them, but I think they'd probably be better served by getting some other graphic artist to do something for them.

Michael Erlewine: Someone that's in synch with them.

Randy Tuten: You know someone like Frank Kozik's style, or like a lot of these new bands and artists, nowadays. They want this flash; they want to make some kind of a statement, rather than just being ... I guess I would probably describe my stuff as... I like to do stuff that looks good, but is in good taste.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well I think you, of all the artists I've had these discussions, you are most consistent, over the length of your career. You're still producing top rate art, some of the other artists are and some of them are not. Some of them peaked or whatever. You haven't really had a peak. Your work is just very steady.

Randy Tuten: Consistent, it's called. (laughs)

MUSIC FAVS

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well that's hard to find and interesting. What kind of music do you like at this time in your life?

Randy Tuten: Well I like everything, I certainly like early jazz. I mean early like New Orleans... Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, even swing, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller. I certainly like folk music from the 50's. I certainly like surf music a lot from the 60's. I always thought that surf music was kind of simple and easy, but it is actually so simple, that the people that do it, have to be more precise.

Michael Erlewine: I saw Brian Wilson, when he came back on that short tour. I saw his first performance of that tour. It was a really awesome experience,

Randy Tuten: Brian Wilson. I don't really view him as a surf musician. He's kind of like... when the Beatles did Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club. It was completely different; every time the people would write the Beatles off, they'd invent something new.

Michael Erlewine: They did.

Randy Tuten: Not new, but just different. It was new too, but it was different and, you know, excited the people too -- excitement kind of thing.

Michael Erlewine: Indeed they did.

CONSISTENT

Randy Tuten: So, I'm always looking to make my stuff better, if that's what you're asking.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I think that you succeeded by doing that.

Randy Tuten: Any artist that thinks, commercial art and fine art, and I'm talking about painters. Generally, when painters make a name for themselves, it's not permanent, but it's more consistent, more famous. I mean that's loosely based, you know. When I say famous, I'm not talking about "stars in your eye" or that kind of thing. Established. I guess "established" would be a better word. Commercial artists kind of gotta' do it every day. Because when you're a commercial artist, if you don't do anything for 10 years, nobody knows about you.

Michael Erlewine: I just had the opportunity to photo-document about 1,000 pieces, many of Gary Grimshaw, from the collection at the Bentley

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Historical Library. In fact, I don't know of any artist that's done more work than he has, because in the mid-west, they didn't get any of the ambiance of the whole scene, in terms of money. He had to work, always. And he worked mostly for the community, the alternative community, and there're just thousands, hundreds and hundreds, of pieces, not all of them are great, of course, but most of them are very interesting.

But not every artist has done this much stuff. I mean, out of all the artists here, the big name ones like Stanley Mouse and so forth have done a lot of work, but not at the quantity level of Gary Grimshaw, I mean in terms of sheer output.

Randy Tuten: Well, I guess you're right. Mouse does a lot of variations. In other words, in the 50's, he was doing T-shirts and car things, you know, so he wasn't always a poster artist. It's like he's an artist more so, than a poster artist. Whereas, I feel I'm just a poster artist, rather than just an artist.

COMPUTER OR BY HAND

Michael Erlewine: Now, do you work with the computer or do you work by hand?

Randy Tuten: Generally, I work by hand. Sometimes, I'll do it by hand and get it into the computer, and then play with it there, like Jim Phillips in Santa Cruz.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah Jim Phillips is such a nice guy.

Randy Tuten: He's a very good artist,

Michael Erlewine: That he is.

Randy Tuten: And he does the computer stuff, but he does it by hand, and then scans it in there, so it still has that look.

Michael Erlewine: Are you Mac or PC?

Randy Tuten: I wouldn't care, probably Mac. Right now, I just operate on a PC.

Michael Erlewine: And what applications?

Randy Tuten: But when I do large posters or large format things, it would be PhotoShop, I guess is that what you are asking?

Michael Erlewine: Do you work in Adobe Illustrator?

Randy Tuten: I know illustrator, but you know, I'm better at just... There are better technicians out there with the computer as a tool, than I am, so I can tell someone what to do on the computer.

Michael Erlewine: I see what you're saying.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, in other words, artists like Jim Phillips in Santa Cruz has taken a long time to learn how to work with this tool. You know, I'm not sure I want to take three years out of my life to learn how to function with a new tool, especially when I use all the old traditional methods.

Michael Erlewine: You're right; it is a transition. Would you be willing for us to show me some things that you're working on? Or just we'll walk around and talk about some stuff?

Randy Tuten: Sure, yeah. Ok here's something I just designed for the Fillmore people. They asked me to do a poster for Train, for the Fillmore. This is just a rough and it's essentially a bell captain, a porter, if you will.

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Tuten Sketch for a Poster

Michael Erlewine: And what is this done with, just pencil or?

Randy Tuten: This is just a rough pencil sketch.

Michael Erlewine: And then from this you'll do what?

Randy Tuten: From this I'll probably paint it with airbrush.

Michael Erlewine: Really.

Randy Tuten: I airbrush it. When you airbrush things, it's not necessarily all airbrush. Just, like in the early days, people would ask me what medium I would like to work in. Well you, know, if scrambled eggs look good on the canvas, you use that. If Crayola looks good, you use that. If airbrushing looks good, you use that. A lot of time, just paint and a brush, just like what they did for a thousand years before computers

came along. You stick the brush in the thing, you just paint it.

Michael Erlewine: So this is very tiny, but then you'll scale it up.

Randy Tuten: Well once the Fillmore folks OK this, then I'll refine it and get the large version going.

Michael Erlewine: And, do you do it at a ratio of one-to-one, or do you do it larger and reduce it or how does that work?

Randy Tuten: I generally like to work a little bit larger and then reduce it, just like by an inch or two, because all of these things have to fit on a scanner, now-a-days. Everything's gotta' be scanned on the computer.

I have a little bit of a problem with the world in general because... it's just like when the united states thought that everyone would be traveling around by airplane, and they let their train system go downhill, and the Europeans did not.

Michael Erlewine: That's right.

Randy Tuten: And now their zipping. European trains are zipping around at 200 miles per hour, and we're still going 60 miles per hour and they're even falling off the tracks.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, they are.

Randy Tuten: So you kinda' need every element, and so back to the question: you need a camera; you need photographs; you need airbrushing touch ups; you need airbrushing; you need computers; you need scanners. It's all got to work in conjunction. Cause, when the power goes out, and it will... Actually, I know people that now -- art departments -- and the Bill Graham art department is a very good example of this. If the power goes out, they don't grab a paper and a pencil. They actually

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call the electrician. Yeah, so everything stops, when the electricity stops.

Michael Erlewine: Well, they should have a generator, right.

Randy Tuten: But you know, the daytime is light and paper and pencil have been around for a long time. Before that, there was the chisel and stone.

Michael Erlewine: So this is actually a drawing then. Is this a copy of something or is that an actual drawing?

Randy Tuten: This is actual drawing, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: It is actual drawing. OK, cool.

Randy Tuten: And this is just a rough drawing, just rough idea.

Michael Erlewine: You take this in to them or you fax it to them?

Randy Tuten: I will fax it to them and see if they like any part of this, and they generally do. All the stuff I've done over the years, probably only about 20 things have been rejected.

Michael Erlewine: Really, and how far ahead is this? Give me an idea of a time frame you have to work in. So this is this May?

Randy Tuten: So I will fax this to them; they will run it past the people that are in charge of all of these decisions, and then they'll get back to me and they'll say: "Yeah, we like this, but we don't like one particular part of it. Can we do something with that?" Then I'll fudge with it a little bit.

In other words, once they OK on the basic rough design, which this is one of, they will give me the OK. And then I'll do a bigger version from this.

Michael Erlewine: The final one?

Randy Tuten: And it'll start to be the final one. But then I'll work out certain problems, like when Rick Griffin and I worked together on three of four projects. Rick couldn't do anything unless he knew what all four corners were going to be.

RICK GRIFFIN'S LAYOUT METHOD

Randy Tuten: And it'll start to be the final one. But then I'll work out certain problems, like when Rick Griffin and I worked together on three of four projects. Rick couldn't do anything unless he knew what all four corners were going to be.

Michael Erlewine: What's that mean?

Randy Tuten: That means he wanted to know exactly what the poster was gonna' look like in the end, before he could start on it.

Michael Erlewine: And how did he do that?

Randy Tuten: Well, I mean it's very difficult. I generally start up at the top or the bottom and work my way up or work my way down or work my way from right to left or left to right. And you just figure it out as you go along, kind of.

Michael Erlewine: But he wanted to have the whole thing in his mind?

Randy Tuten: Rick liked to have the whole thing in mind. Like when these designs I do, they're essentially in my mind. I see them, but I can't certainly convey it to people, as to what I'm seeing

Michael Erlewine: Right, so this is for a few weeks from now.

Randy Tuten: A few weeks from now, Yeah.

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Michael Erlewine: What is the time frame of something like that? You're given... how many days would it take you to make the final one, roughly?

Randy Tuten: Well, in the old days, we used to do these things overnight, believe it or not.

Michael Erlewine: Grimshaw said the same thing. That's hard to believe.

Randy Tuten: It is hard to believe, because nowadays, I just couldn't do it, but things have gotten much more technical. It's not as simple as the 60's were.

Michael Erlewine: So you'll do a full scale one, with color, and then they'll scan the thing. You have to get it to them.

Randy Tuten: The full scale one I do in color is the final; this is the rough. I've been doing this for like 30 years or so now

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: A lot of the time, people will like to see a color rough and, occasionally, I will do a color rough, but in most cases I just do a black and white rough, with indications of color, written indications of color.

And they'll just have to take my word for it.

Michael Erlewine: That one is going to be nice.

Randy Tuten: It's gonna' be nice; I'll make it nice. Well, you know, about 90% of the time... maybe not that much... maybe 70-90% of the time, the things come out real nice. Frequently, I'll be disappointed in them, but I've learned to just keep my mouth shut about my expectations in the thing.

Michael Erlewine: And they don't necessarily even notice what you're disappointed.

Randy Tuten: No. Yeah, they wouldn't. In the early days, Bill Graham used to ask what I thought of my work and I would go "Well, this is wrong, that's wrong, this didn't come out right, this is the wrong color." Well, after about a month of this, he stopped asking me.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs)

Randy Tuten: Cause, obviously, I didn't know what I was talking about. So I should just keep my opinions to myself, and just do the work.

Michael Erlewine: And try to improve it.

Randy Tuten: And try to improve it, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Well, that's cool.

Randy Tuten: I mean you never... you never stop trying to improve it.

Michael Erlewine: And what is this piece about?

Randy Tuten: This is a lettering logo for a restaurant down here. It's particularly good food and the chef, whom I'm privileged to know, owns and operates the place. There are certain chefs in the world that get interesting tastes. It's not just typical food. It's good food, but there are certain tastes that you cook things with, that make the things better, taste better.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: Certain chefs in the world have the knack, you know

Michael Erlewine: That's right, and this is what you've actually drawn all that out.

Randy Tuten: That's all drawn out, yeah.

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Michael Erlewine: Wow, that's a lot of work, and you have curves and things to use to do that?

Randy Tuten: Well, you use French curves, yeah. I mean there's no substitute for a hand done piece. In other words, computers are incredible tools and computers can do some incredible things, but a computer ... I can actually rule, if you need two lines parallel and running around a page, that faster than a computer can do it.

Michael Erlewine: Really.

Randy Tuten: With some of the basic things, the computer makes it more complex than it is.

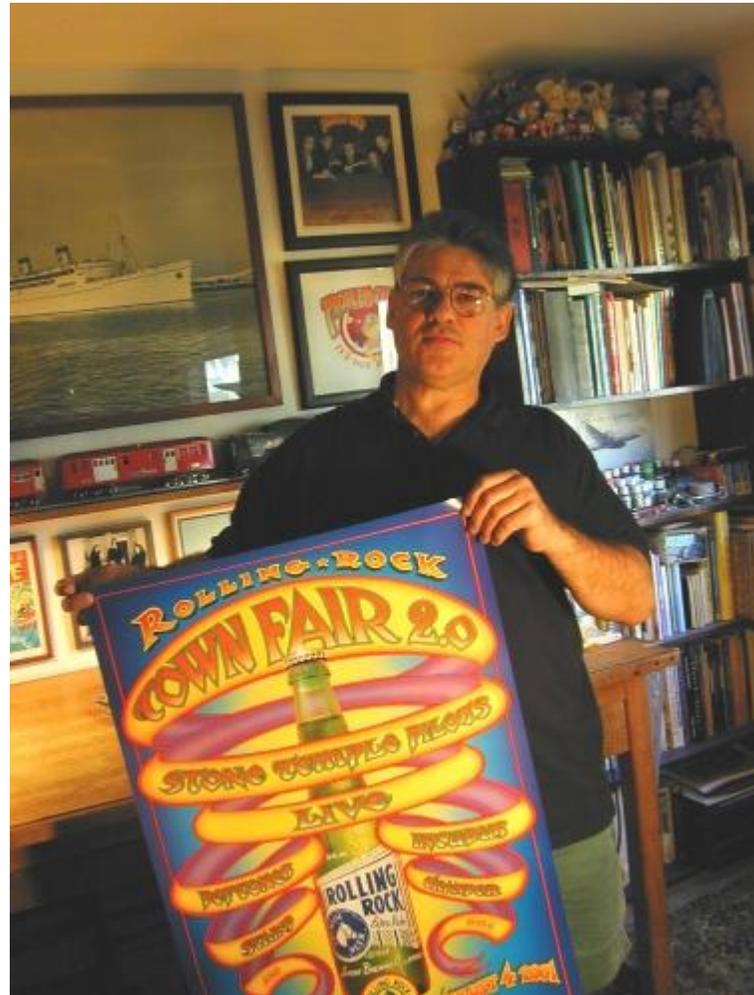
Michael Erlewine: It's complex, no doubt.

Randy Tuten: Whereas, with very complex things, the computer actually makes it simpler.

Michael Erlewine: That's right.

Randy Tuten: So the computer is good, but it is strictly a tool to be used in the right way. You can't use it for everything. Some of these people now a days design things on computers and they look like they're designed on computers.

Michael Erlewine: Right, what is this? This is a finished piece of some kind.



Tuten Sketch for a Poster

Randy Tuten: This is a piece I just finished for Rolling Rock Town Fair 2.0, a concert they're giving back in Pennsylvania... the Stone Temple Pilots and a band called "Live" and "Def Tones" and "Incubus."

Michael Erlewine: It vaguely reminds me of the Bob Fried piece of that skeleton with the ribbons coming down both sides.

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Grateful Dead Bob Fried Piece

Randy Tuten: Yeah, ribbon is always good. I mean these people had a number of designs that I did for them, and this was the simplest of the lot.

Michael Erlewine: Did they approve this? They saw roughs on this?

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And they're happy with it.

Randy Tuten: Yeah. With this, I did black and white roughs, with color indications, written color indications, and first that's how we get started. A client has to have some direction about where we're going. See you know if we're on the same page or not.

Michael Erlewine: Is this all hand done?

Randy Tuten: That's hand done and then scanned into the computer, and then colorized, and airbrushed on the computer.

Michael Erlewine: I don't know that much about airbrush, so with airbrush you use a computer to airbrush?

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Ok. Now I am with you.

Randy Tuten: Rather than using an actual airbrush with compressed air, with paint spraying on the canvas or the paper.

Michael Erlewine: Right, so you use Photoshop or something like that?

Randy Tuten: Exactly, and this was such a big project... like this poster was 36x24 inches... to actually paint or airbrush this, you know, bigger size, would have been a headache. There was also a banner for this and it was 6 feet by 3 feet.



Finished Posters on ROMs

Michael Erlewine: So these are big files then.

Randy Tuten: These are big files. Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And then what you write them to ROM?

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Randy Tuten: Well, we put them on a CD.

Michael Erlewine: So you make a CD.

Randy Tuten: Yeah. You can't see this, but there's the banner, the 6x3 foot banner of the same thing. Here's the poster.

Michael Erlewine: Let me see the banner for a second.

Randy Tuten: Now this was a thing called a case card, 25" x14".

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: And this was the Rolling Stone ad.

Michael Erlewine: So you put out nice colors. You make it look nice.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, it's all the professional thing. You are supposed to be a professional in this world,

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well it looks good.

Randy Tuten: You know it's not about your... just mad hippie artist.

Michael Erlewine: No, not anymore. Right.

Randy Tuten: You get stoned, drunk, whatever, hippie artist... just painting things for fun. You're supposed to be professional at it.

Michael Erlewine: I know. I used to do the posters for our band, so I'm a little bit of a poster person, but not much of one. So that's cool, that's very interesting

Randy Tuten: So that's just the process. You know, first you do something. First people contact me, and then I'll generally do just a little thumbnail sketch, just a very rough sketch, to see what direction they'd like to go with this.

MUSIC FAVS MORE

Randy Tuten: You asked me about what kind of music I like. I like all kinds of music, obviously rock and roll, jazz, blues, rhythm & blues are great, blues... Straight blues are terrific.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I'm a big blues fan.

Randy Tuten: Even show music, even classical music

Michael Erlewine: Really.

Randy Tuten: Classical music is great stuff.

Michael Erlewine: What kind of classical do you like?

Randy Tuten: Well, Mozart, Beethoven - - all that kinda' stuff. Sounds just great.

Michael Erlewine: What about reading? What do you like to read?

Randy Tuten: It can be anything from pirate/adventure stories to true life... pirate stuff to mysteries, to Ian Fleming, to James Bond to Charlie Chan, some science fiction, generally mysteries, and that kind of stuff.

Michael Erlewine: What about movies? What kind of movies do you like?

Randy Tuten: Oh, all movies, as long as they're good and have interesting stories...

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine



Tuten's Leghorns

Michael Erlewine: Can I get a picture of those guys? I mean that's great.

Randy Tuten: That's all right, my chickens.

Michael Erlewine: Maybe I'll turn that light on the chickens.

Randy Tuten: Foghorn Leghorn.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I know.

Randy Tuten: And Charlie McCarthy

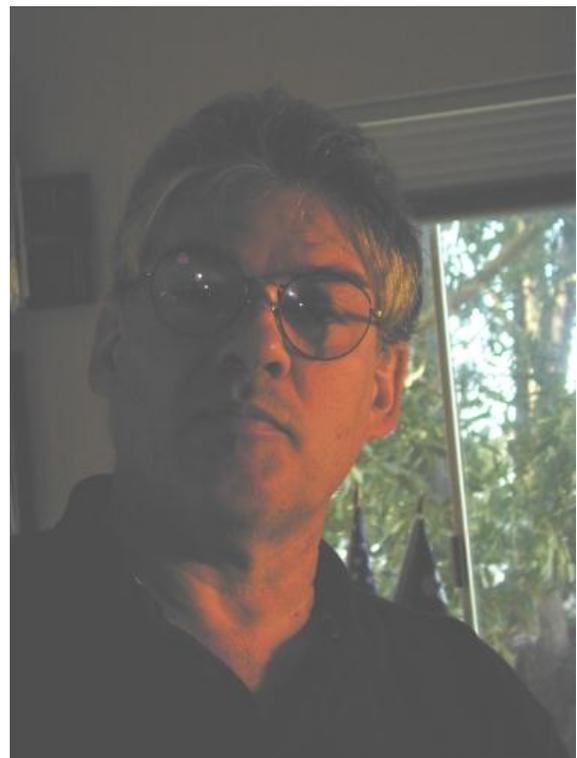
Michael Erlewine: Yeah Charlie, I used to have one of those.

Randy Tuten: Actually that's just very temporary. That'll be going away.



Tuten's Fridge

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY



Randy Tuten

Michael Erlewine: Where do you stand with religion and all that kind of stuff? What do you do for philosophical, spirituality? Any comment?

Randy Tuten: Sure, I always have a comment about everything. (laughs)

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: Great.

Randy Tuten: Where do I stand on religion. Well religion is great.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) That's a good one. Well, that covers it, you know.

Randy Tuten: Yeah. When I was a young man, I went with different churches, with different friends, and different girlfriends, and with my mother and father. My father was a Southern Baptist and my mother was a Catholic. One of my girlfriends was... I didn't know it at the time, but her parents were John Bircher's.

And so I went to that church, and from what I gathered from all of this religion and churches, they're all saying the same thing, but they're all saying it in they're own way. So what kinda' struck me about religion was it was almost like you don't have to be a member of somewhere to be religious. You don't have to be a member of a particular organization to be religious.

Michael Erlewine: That's what I got out of it.

Randy Tuten: That people get together because it makes them feel good.

Michael Erlewine: Good comment.

Randy Tuten: But I never felt a need to go get religion from an organization.

Michael Erlewine: Amen.

Randy Tuten: Cause they generally try to make some money out of it somewhere. (laughs)

Michael Erlewine: Absolutely.

Randy Tuten: I think the fact that the Catholic church doesn't pay land taxes or something like the property taxes, you know. There's something wrong

with that. You want a religion, that's great, but you're supposed to foot the bill, just like everyone else foots the bill.

Michael Erlewine: How do you feel about getting older? You know you're gonna' die sometime. Any comments on that?

Randy Tuten: 100 Years on this planets is more than enough..

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) OK, that's great.

Randy Tuten: I really do. I would hate to die and then go wherever I'm going, and then have to go and get an apartment and get the P.G. & E. hooked up, and get the telephone hooked up, in the next life. I would feel cheated. So I hope the next life, and personally I don't believe there is a next life. It's just this life and then you're dead.

Michael Erlewine: And what then though?

Randy Tuten: You're just through, and someone else comes along. Next civilization, or the next person, or well...

Michael Erlewine: You don't believe in a continuity of consciousness?

Randy Tuten: You know I do. I certainly am open to all those things. Rick Griffin really was a cosmic guy. He thought about all this stuff entirely too much, so if you asked him a question, it might be an hour before he got back to you with the answer.

Michael Erlewine: What was he thinking?

Randy Tuten: Well, there is just so much to think about in this world. You can't know. Reincarnation could be something that actually happens, and it could not. So you don't know unless you

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

head out that way. You can't come back, once you head out that way. It's that way for a reason.

Michael Erlewine: And Griffin was into these kind of questions?

Randy Tuten: Well, Rick was just into everything. You know whether it be a party or women or religion or good art.

Michael Erlewine: He was into Theosophy at one point, and then he had a conversion and re-found Christianity. Did you know him during that period?

Randy Tuten: Oh, absolutely.

Michael Erlewine: What was that like?

Randy Tuten: It made no difference.

Michael Erlewine: What does that mean?

Randy Tuten: Well, that's what people perceive, that it was a big thing for him, but it was just another thing for him to think about. Something else to think about how the world is. It's like the age-old question "Why? Why are we here? Why am I here? Why is everyone here? What are we doing? Where are we going?" There are really no answers. We just keep on going and keep on doing it.

Michael Erlewine: I would agree with that.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, if you stop and ask yourself "why" too many times, you actually find yourself wasting your time, so you just cruise along. You just get down the road.

Michael Erlewine: And how long have you been down in this area of the country, near Half Moon Bay?

Randy Tuten: Oh, just for the last year and a half.

Michael Erlewine: And this is comfortable? You're happy here?

Randy Tuten: I'm happier than I've been in awhile.

Michael Erlewine: I mean this is beautiful...driving along the Pacific Coast.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, this area, Half Moon Bay and the Pacific can be fogged in, but here where I am, it's like a little farm belt, a little banana belt, if you will. They grow vegetables in this area, and it seems like a lot of the time, when those two other places are fogged in, it'll be sunny here, like it is today. Sunny, and blue skies at night. Now, it's not always that way, obviously, but a lot more than people think. But maybe we shouldn't tell anyone that it's nice down here, they'll all be coming down here. (laughs)



Tuten and His Drawing Board

Randy Tuten: See, so I'm not the mean guy everyone portrays me out to be, huh?

Michael Erlewine: No, I don't think so. Well, I never thought so anyway. I talked to you on the phone a few times.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Randy Tuten: But I don't mind people thinking that about me, cause then they wont bother me as much. There are a lot of people out there that want things for nothing.

Michael Erlewine: This is true.

Randy Tuten: And I don't blame them. I want things for nothing, but that's not how it is.

Michael Erlewine: There are a few artists, and you're one of them that, from my point of view, haven't gotten enough credit and attention. Bob Freid is another one that I'm working on too.

Randy Tuten: Well, you know credit's a funny thing. Credit and fame and all that stuff is a funny thing. You're not supposed to think about that.

Michael Erlewine: No, but just for justice.

Randy Tuten: Well, there probably isn't a lot of justice in the world. You go look at people who are politically oppressed. There's certainly no justice there.

Michael Erlewine: Right. Amen.

Randy Tuten: And so the fact that we get away with what we do is some kind of justice right there. The fact that I get to work at home and work for myself, that I don't have anyone telling me what I can or can't do, is certainly, certainly important.

Michael Erlewine: And I've done the same thing, worked out of my home all my life, even when I had businesses, my office was at home.

Randy Tuten: A certain amount of freedom comes with all this stuff.

Michael Erlewine: Now did you know Bob Fried? Did you ever meet him? I knew that he was an incredible designer

and he had a really good balance to all his stuff. It not only looked good, it was balanced. All his stuff had a lot of balance to it.

VICTOR MOSCOSO

What do you think of Victor Moscoso's art? He's someone else who's had quite a bit of commercial, not commercial, but formal art training.

Randy Tuten: Well, Victor's right in his approach to everything, but sometimes he can be... for lack of a better term... hard headed, stubborn.

Michael Erlewine: This I've really heard. I've heard a lot of stories about Victor; I'm going to go see him this week.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, he's very stubborn, and you know he's certainly right, but there's a point where you can take it to far. All these guys, like me, and everyone else. It's not a political office we're running for. We're not trying to win a political, you know, who's the most popular contest. We're just doing some work here, and trying to make a living out of it.

Michael Erlewine: This is where you are unusual. You seem to have very consistent. You kept going. You're still doing work as good as you ever did, as far as I can tell.

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Are there any young artists that you see coming up that you admire, that you think, that you enjoy? Is there anyone that affected you?

Randy Tuten: Well, yeah. There's one painter out there called Randy Chavez that does nice stuff. There's a couple of guys that I like. I've looked at their stuff. Well, that's kind of interesting. So there's always new guys on the horizon,

but that's what it's all about, you know. It's like the old leaves on the tree, you know. They die and they fall off the tree and then some, next year, some new leaves come out.

Michael Erlewine: And the old leaves... sounds like the movie "Being There." Do you know that movie?

Michael Erlewine: Of the original SF artists, which have affected you?

Randy Tuten: Well the same three guys that I mentioned: Rick Griffin, Stanley Mouse, and Alton Kelley. I have the highest regard for those three guys.

Michael Erlewine: That's great to hear.

Randy Tuten: Period.

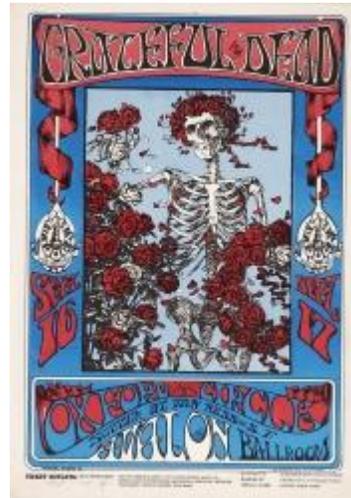
DEALERS

Randy Tuten: There's nothing wrong with the dealers, but it's like antique-furniture dealers. They'll give you about, you know, 25% or 1/3 of what it's actually worth and then they want to make some money on it. So I have nothing against dealers, other than they're dealers.

Yeah, I mean essentially dealers are... how should I say put this? Dealers are always shortchanging the artist. They're looking to make some money.

Michael Erlewine: Well my friend Mark Arminski is someone that I see, because we're in the same area. He is trying to do less with the dealers. I mean he and I have talked about it. He wholesales too much of his art.

Randy Tuten: And then the dealer sells it, and then you're out of the picture.



Skull and Roses FD-26

Randy Tuten: Well, see part of the problem is like you know, the Kelley/Mouse posters "Skull and Roses?" You know a lot of the posters they do nowadays, especially a lot of the Bill Graham posters are designed on a computer, strictly on computer. They don't have the same impact as let's say "Skull and Roses" or "The Flying Eyeball" or even my "Avocado" Led Zeppelin poster.

Michael Erlewine: So you feel that, this is... I mean you're opening up a can of worms there. I don't know if I could put it into words, but you're suggesting that hand done things have some eccentricities and that computers don't have their own kind of eccentricities...

Randy Tuten: Absolutely.

Michael Erlewine: Really, some people would argue with you about that.

Randy Tuten: I know.

Michael Erlewine: They would think that you could set the slip of the hand or the movement or the..

Randy Tuten: Some computer things look phenomenal. But in general, when it's designed entirely on the computer...

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

and a lot of these people that have computers are not necessarily artists...

Michael Erlewine: Well, that's true.

Randy Tuten: I'd say that's where the problem arises.

Michael Erlewine: Some artists out there do use computers well, though.

Randy Tuten: Usually everybody wants to be an artist. Everybody likes to be an artist

Michael Erlewine: True.

Randy Tuten: Everyone feels good about being an artist. The problem about being an artist is you really have to give up all the parties and all the good times and everything and just stay home and do work.

Michael Erlewine: True of anything, right.

Randy Tuten: It's like people nowadays really want everything. It's hard to get everything.

Michael Erlewine: Well, it's no substitute for passion.

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And what I try to teach my kids... I have home schooled them for the most part. To begin to find what you're interested in.

Randy Tuten: Right, find something you like to do and do it.

Michael Erlewine: Right. Like I never got out of high school. I so wanted just to go out in the world and get started.

Randy Tuten: You know, for as long as I can remember, people have been telling me 'No', I can't do that.

Michael Erlewine: Well, me too.

Randy Tuten: I don't buy that.

Michael Erlewine: Personally no, I don't either. I mean I've always done... Yeah, I was a musician way back then. I played at the Fillmore, the Matrix, and so on, when we came out in 1967. We opened for Cream. Mike Bloomfield was a friend of mine. He put us up at the heliport in Sausalito.

Randy Tuten: Yep, I know the place. Quicksilver Messenger Service used to practice there all the time.

Michael Erlewine: Well we practiced and slept there. We played around there at a rib joint, just to make meals. We didn't have any money or anything. Anyway it was fun.

Randy Tuten: Having money is over rated.

Michael Erlewine: It's nice.

Randy Tuten: It's not why we're all here. That's not why we're doing what we do. Obviously the money's important to pay the bills, but it was never really part of the whole thing. It's not supposed to be part of the whole thing. But unfortunately this world is very commercial. That's what everything is translated to.

Michael Erlewine: Real estate out here in California is amazingly expensive.

Randy Tuten: I don't own anything.

Michael Erlewine: I don't know about down here, but up in San Francisco.

Randy Tuten: Well that's essentially the reason I moved out of San Francisco. Not only is it so expensive... Policemen I know, all unanimously agree that San Francisco was never designed for this many cars, for this many people. So essentially, I think it's over populated. There are too many people. All the problems in the world are caused by too

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many people. But everyone looks for other solutions for all these problems.

Michael Erlewine: Now I'm from the Midwest, I couldn't sleep last night, because I was still on my old schedule, so I was up at 3 AM. But I was driving across the bridge at 5:30 AM.... I thought I'd come over and look at some sights, but the bridge was bumper to bumper almost the whole way at that time in the morning! I couldn't believe it.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, there's just too many people. And you know, the gas prices should be more, but the money for the gas prices should be... Like in Europe, they use the gas money to fix the highways. They don't do that over here. So people over here are essentially spoiled, when it comes to buying gasoline. It should be \$3-4 dollars a gallon. If they'd used the money to fix the roads, but you know...

But also the worst thing about San Francisco is the parking. When you live up there, your life is literally ruled by a parking place. There are people that own houses that are actually putting the garages ... they're shoveling out into the earth, putting the garages under their existing houses.

Michael Erlewine: You mean there are no spots available?

Randy Tuten: There's no room.

Michael Erlewine: That's wow, that's amazing.

Randy Tuten: There are people that are spending millions of dollars to put a garage under their house. That's kind of a waste of money.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well, I just got here yesterday, so I was parking in Berkeley. Even there, there's no place

right? It was packed. I had to go round and round, and finally found a little parking lot, You know it costs 6 bucks to park there for a couple hours.

AMOUNT OF WORK

Michael Erlewine: How about the amount of work you have coming in?

Randy Tuten: Ok, I always have enough work to do. I always have too much work to do.

Michael Erlewine: Well some of the artists, the older ones don't have enough work.

Randy Tuten: First of all, when you're doing this kind of work, it seems like a lot of people won't go back and do basic stuff. It's like a carpenter that hates to do picket fences. You know, but sometimes you just have to go back and do that kind of stuff. It's like where you came from. You can't forget where you came from.

Michael Erlewine: Good point.

Randy Tuten: You can't stop doing one thing, because you don't think it pays particularly well or you're tired of it, or you think it should be... you want to move into a new art-type field or something you know/

Michael Erlewine: So it's the 'commercial' part of commercial art.

Randy Tuten: So you do what jobs come up. If they don't pay, maybe what you think, you just shut up and do them.

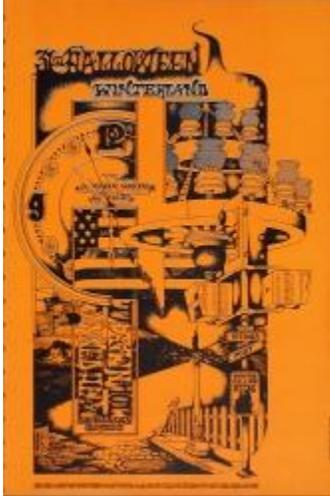
Michael; That's why I admire early Grimshaw, because he did so many different things, you know, topless bars, anything.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, it's like the Nike adds on TV. "Just Do It." You just be quiet, shut up, and just do it. No one

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cares about what I think politically, or religiously, or philosophically or anything else. Just do the work is what they care about.

Randy Tuten: This is like the first poster I did. It was for the "Family Dog".



Family Dog Poster

Michael Erlewine: Right. I've got that one.

Randy Tuten: Then, oh well, anyway, I was telling this story earlier. I tried to work for the Family Dog for a year. I took stuff there, and showed Chet Helms stuff and wanted to do stuff, because Mouse and Alton Kelley and Rick Griffin were doing all their posters, and so I figured... Actually, what got me into posters was I used to see all these great posters by all these people, and then I started seeing some sub-par posters and I said "Well, anyone can do these."

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) Right.

Randy Tuten: Well, not anyone can do them, but a lot of people do them that really have no business doing posters.

Michael Erlewine: Right, yeah, that's true

BILL GRAHAM

Randy Tuten: So anyway, after about a year at the Family Dog, I got pretty disgusted with everything, and I went to see Bill Graham, and within five minutes he hired me to do four posters.

Michael Erlewine: Really?

Randy Tuten: And he wanted me to do posters from then on out.

Michael Erlewine: And what was that about, did he just like you? You got along? What was it?

Randy Tuten: He liked my style, that's all. We didn't necessarily get on in the early days. We had a lot of conflicts and yelling matches, face to face, which is fine. And then towards the end of his life, we actually got on better, because I understood where he was coming from. He just wanted a good looking product. And if there was some turmoil involved with it, he usually blew off steam and then went on about his business.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: So after awhile, I learned that if you have all the answers for Bill Graham, no problem. In other words, it's like doing your homework. You don't know the answers for the test, if you don't do your homework ...

Michael Erlewine: There's gonna' be some yelling, right?

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Well, that's cool.

Randy Tuten: So you're just supposed to know what you're talking about.

Michael Erlewine: That's a good sign.

Randy Tuten: Or don't say anything.

Michael Erlewine: Right. You can't argue with that.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And these are great. Are these your personal copies? Do you have a history of your own work?

Randy Tuten: Well, I've got a large history of my own work. These are the posters that I've done. Not all the logos or the point-of-purchase things or album covers or any of that kind of stuff. These are just the posters I've done.

Michael Erlewine: What kind of album covers have you done?

Randy Tuten: Well, I just did a couple things with the Grateful Dead. I just did a "Stoned Immaculate" for Electra Records for music of the Doors. And I just did a nice Grateful Dead package for the Fillmore East, "Live at the Fillmore East." And then I just did a thing with the "Persuasions sing Grateful Dead," and all these other new bands like Stone Temple Pilots and Creed and all these bands that are doing the Doors music.

Michael Erlewine: You did a great old Doors poster; I'm sure it's in there somewhere, which I really love.

Randy Tuten: All the Led Zeppelin things that came along, I ended up doing. It was a fluke. It wasn't designed that way. And then Rick Griffin did all the Jimi Hendrix stuff, but that was just a fluke.

Michael Erlewine: Serendipity.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, that was just a fluke of the scheduling. No one designed it to do that way.

Michael Erlewine: Cosmic humor.

Randy Tuten: Kind of.

Randy Tuten: Actually this Chuck Berry 'hamburger' poster... At the time Chuck

Berry was doing that song, "Play with My Ding-a-ling," which I thought was the stupidest song of all time.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) Right, well yeah, pretty dumb, but funny.

Randy Tuten: Considering all the songs that he did that never really made it to the charts, that one went to number one. That's kind of how silly humanity is, you know. So I did this poster with the hamburger because Chuck Berry, I thought, was a hamburger for doing this, like an egomaniac, and obviously Michael Bloomfield had quite the ego too.

Michael Erlewine: Ok, I knew Michael.

Randy Tuten: So, essentially, I did this poster with the hamburger for those two reasons.

Randy Tuten: Now there's another story about this thing. I was sitting in Bill Graham's office with Bill, and we were talking about this hamburger poster. He was asking me what I thought of it, and how I liked it, and all that stuff, and the door files open and Nick Gravanites came storming in holding one of these posters, yelling that his name was not big enough on the poster.

And Bill just looked at me and put his finger to his lips like "shhh!" and he and Nick Gravanites yelled for about, you know, like maybe a minute, and then Gravanites just stormed out of the office, and we kinda' had a chuckle about it.

Michael Erlewine: And yeah I know this guy also. Pointing to Mark Naftalin's picture.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, Mark Naftalin.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, so he's still in the area here.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Randy Tuten: Remember East-West? Boy, it's probably one of the greatest records of all time.

Michael Erlewine: I just sent to Mark Naftalin (a couple years ago) recordings I made of the Paul Butterfield Blues Band in Chicago doing East-West, the title song, at Poor Richard's. And then Naftalin published it. He made a CD of it and other versions of that cut. Anyway, I knew all those guys a little, so that's the kind of music I really loved. The Butterfield Band turned me on.

Randy Tuten: You know, as far as rock & roll music, it's really the stuff from the 60's that I still listen to, you know, like Buffalo Springfield, the Doors. I love Chambers Brothers, Lee Michaels, H.P. Lovecraft ...loved HP Lovecraft.

Michael Erlewine: Yup.

Randy Tuten: So that obscure stuff is kind what I still like.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, sure. Me too.

Randy Tuten: You know, a long time ago Bill Graham and I were talking and he said "You know there's gonna' be more music in the future, but it's not gonna' be more necessarily good music. You're not gonna' get more good music along with more bad music. In the future, the bad music will always outrange the good music."

Michael Erlewine: Well, that's the truth.

Randy Tuten: So in the 60's it was like, you know, maybe 20 bands, and they were all fairly good. Nowadays there's probably 2,000 to 10,000 bands and probably only, maybe 2500 of them are good.

Michael Erlewine: If that many. For my taste, I don't get into too much new music.

Randy Tuten: Let's say like out of 20,000 bands maybe 2500 of them would be interesting.

Michael Erlewine: And maybe 20 of them I might like to listen to.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, I mean you can go into a record store nowadays, and you can kind look at what's being released. There's so much stuff out there. I'm not a big fan of Rap music though.

Michael Erlewine: Me neither.

Randy Tuten: Rap music essentially is poetry, you know.

Michael Erlewine: Right, it's true. Yeah, I'm a blues and jazz guy.

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And old rock & roll, I like old rock.

Randy Tuten: So, I did movie "Performance" from the 60's (late 69'), Ry Cooder did the music for it. On that album there was a thing by the Last Poets and it was the earliest version of rap music, but it was poetry.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, did you know John Sinclair? He does poetry and music.

Randy Tuten: Oh yeah, I don't know him, but I know of him.

Michael Erlewine: He has a thing called the 'John Sinclair and the Blues Scholars', and it's fun. It's actually... I thought it was going to be horrible, poetry against blues, cause' I'm kind of a blues expert, a little bit, and it was actually good. Sinclair is a real blues scholar.

Randy Tuten: No, you never do. You never know where you're gonna' find good stuff.

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Michael Erlewine: It's true. (laughs)

Randy Tuten: It's just, you know, it's the right timing. Timing is pretty important in this world. Actually timing is probably more important than probably any other single thing there is. There's an old saying, "No amount of planning can take the place of dumb luck."

Michael Erlewine: Right, (laughs) that's a good one.

Randy Tuten: That's really true. You know, if you're in the wrong place at the wrong time, you've got no chance at all

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, that's true,

Randy Tuten: Period. And the Janis Joplin poster, [# BG165]? Bill actually called me up when he saw this. He actually called me up at 9 A.M. in the morning, after I'd been up all night working, and he yelled. He said " You ruined my fuckin' poster!" and then hung up.

Michael Erlewine: But he didn't say why, what was?

Randy Tuten: Well, the lettering. The lettering was too hard to read. I don't normally do that kind of psychedelic lettering.

Michael Erlewine: But he should have been used to it by then.

Randy Tuten: It's certainly no harder to read that some of the other Wes Wilson posters.

Michael Erlewine: Wes' right. Well, no kidding. it's nice; it's beautiful.

Randy Tuten: And then Jim Marshal called me up later on in the afternoon and said he was mad because his picture wasn't used big enough for him.

Michael Erlewine: Oh, I mean, that's just like we did it with the All-Music Guide, with all the reviews. No artist is EVER happy.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, yeah. And the BG-169. That was the famous band concert where Robbie Robertson had stage fright And the show was like delayed for 2 hours. Bill Graham had to go hire a hypnotist to hypnotize Robby Robertson, so he could go on stage and play. Now, Robby Robertson and other members of "The Band" had been playing with Ronnie Hawkins and all sorts of people, for like over ten years, so he had no reason to have stage fright. It was just because it was the first time it was his band, The Band. The Band was quite something else, cause you know these rock and roll guys would, like Led Zeppelin, would show up and rock everyone's socks off. Well these guys would come out of the woods and do the same thing, knock your socks off. They were stunners. Because they, they would just annihilate you, overwhelm you with what they were doing.

Michael Erlewine: That's cool.

Randy Tuten: And you wouldn't expect it. But that's why The Band's second album is called "Stage Fright."

Michael Erlewine: Oh, I didn't know that.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, that's where that title came from.

Randy Tuten: And my Led Zeppelin avocado, BG-170 poster.

Michael Erlewine: Where did this come from?

Randy Tuten: Well actually, in college, when I went to college for awhile, the art teachers would give you certain projects

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

to do, and one of the projects that was handed me was to come up with a menu design for a restaurant. But what I came up with was for the "Avocado Club."

Michael Erlewine: So, you had this around...

Randy Tuten: Well, the design was around, was done in college and then one day Bill had given me the job for Led Zeppelin, and I was just really tired of using blimps and stuff, and seeing blimps used by... It was like too obvious, too obvious a thing to use for a Led Zeppelin poster, blimp. Duh. So I thought, well, why don't we just put the crazy avocado with eyes, with the green... Actually, at one point I tried to sell Bill on a whole series of crazy fruit posters.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) He wouldn't go for it?

Randy Tuten: Well, not back-to-back. Like, one a month, you know, for like six months. Have an orange with all orange, and then have an apple, and a banana, and a pineapple -- all that stuff. But he loved this poster.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, it's cool.

Randy Tuten: But he didn't go for the whole fruit idea.

Michael Erlewine: Right, it's great lettering, and that was just all done by hand.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, these were all done by hand, and they were all done by hand in mechanical and actual physical artwork.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: That's the problem with computers. You don't get a physical

piece of artwork. You don't get a painting. You get a file.

Michael Erlewine: No original art, Right?

Randy Tuten: Yeah, you get a file. I like the fact that original art, most of the time, looks better.

Michael Erlewine: Absolutely. Dennis King was showing me some of his Derek Hess originals. Unbelievable.

Randy Tuten: Oh yeah, Dennis has got a gorgeous collection of original artwork.

Michael Erlewine: Yes he does.

Randy Tuten: Denis has got...you know the famous poster I did for Led Zeppelin, with the big space blimp in outer space? He's got the original art for that.

Michael Erlewine: Oh really?

Randy Tuten: He's got the original art for the Janis Joplin, PG-165, Dennis King has got a beautiful collection.

Randy Tuten: But he's paid for it, over the years, you know. You give up a lot.

Michael Erlewine: Now this is interesting. Yeah, this is a great poster.

Randy Tuten: The doors, yeah BG-186. And they wanted me to use the Doors logo, and I said " Let me do some other kind of lettering," just cause the logo was so... it's recognizable and it's famous, but you know, it's used all the time for the Doors.

Michael Erlewine: And you made this whole thing right?

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I mean that's to me one of your best posters.

Randy Tuten: It was just a press, a PR photo, and I just put in some like acid-melty lines, kind of a thing.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: But isn't it beautiful?

Randy Tuten: Well, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I mean do you like it too? I mean you did it all, but is this a favorite of yours? Or it doesn't matter from one or the other?

Randy Tuten: I've done too many things to have a favorite.

Michael Erlewine: Ok, well this is one of my favorites.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, it's certainly a good looking item, and you know over the years, it seems... sometimes when you do things simple, leave things simple, you get a better breed. In other words, trying to make things complex and tricky and ...

Michael Erlewine: I know, and this is probably one of the reasons I like Gary Grimshaw, cause Grimshaw is not afraid to use solid color.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, just basics, using space, balance

Michael Erlewine: Loading things in color.

Randy Tuten: It's like the Bob Fried thing, it is balanced. You know, it's gotta' have the balance, Rick Griffin had that also.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, he did. Here is another one that's also very nice

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Are you, so you just kinda' had a thing with The Doors.

Randy Tuten: That's BG-219. A pretty rare poster.

Michael Erlewine: This is beautiful, elegant.

Randy Tuten: And that's BG-277, the Airstream trailer one.

Michael Erlewine: Ahh, it's neat. I mean isn't that lovely?

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I don't know much about it, but I know what I like.

Randy Tuten: See this BG-282. Actually, this portion was not supposed to be there. They added that in the last second.

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Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I can see that.

Randy Tuten: And it murdered the poster. But the BG-281.

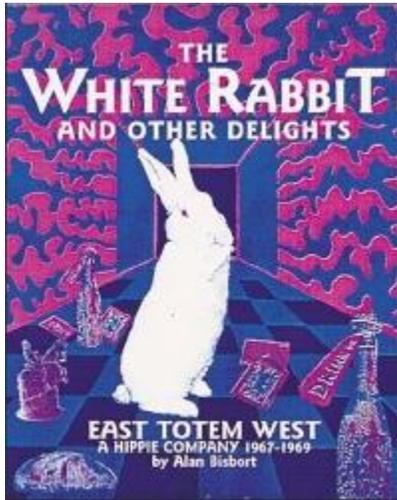
Michael Erlewine: You got some tomatoes in there.

Randy Tuten: The "Rascals" with the tomatoes. But I designed this poster with the tomatoes for one simple reason, the red that they would print, would probably be a tomato red. It would never be a true blood red. It was always that kind of a warm red.

And so I designed this poster to utilize that, that red, but they were in such a hurry, they had to print it black and white, because they needed it fast.

Randy Tuten: This is just some miscellaneous stuff. I worked for this one company, Direct Productions, did about probably 25-30 poster designs for them. People just don't know about that one.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine



Bob Fried Memorial Boogie

Randy Tuten: This was the "Bob Fried Memorable Boogie." And, you know, it's Mouse, Kelley, Wes Wilson, Victor Moscoso, and myself.

Michael Erlewine: And what did you do on it?

Randy Tuten: I did this lettering right here...

Michael Erlewine: Oh, "Winterland."

Randy Tuten: And, I did that lettering, "Memorial Bob Fried Boogie."

Michael Erlewine: Well ok, cause that looks like you.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, this is Wes Wilson right here...

Michael Erlewine: Wes did the middle.

Randy Tuten: Kelley, I think, put the collages together around all the outside.

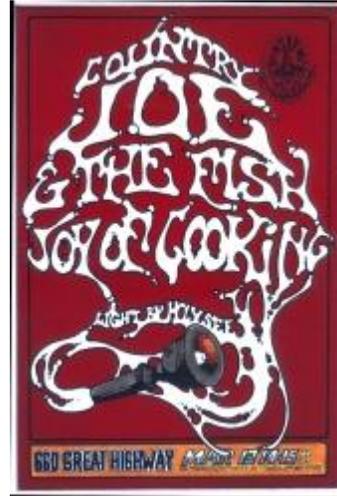
Michael Erlewine: And Victor Moscoso did some of the coloring?

Randy Tuten: And Mouse had something to do with it, and Victor has something to do with the coloring.

Michael Erlewine: That looks like Victor...

Randy Tuten: And if you notice, the shadow of the bird on the bottom lettering, people never notice that.

Randy Tuten: That was the older book of all the stuff, and this is the newer book of some of the newer stuff.



Joy of Cooking

Randy Tuten: We used to smoke pot in the old days.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, (laughs) me too.

Randy Tuten: And we used to use a tuba mouthpiece, with a 30-caliber shell casing, with the back cut off, with an extension on the tuba mouth piece, so it was like fuel injection. And you'd roll a big joint and stick it in the other, and you'd blow on the tuba mouth piece. So the white thick smoke would come out of the other end.

And that's where this design came from. I freshened up the design, took out the tuba mouth piece, and put in a genie's lamp with hieroglyphics, buying a ticket, the Fillmore, and walking up the stairs, getting the apple, dancing and listening to music.

Michael Erlewine: I like the lettering, I think its so nice.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Randy Tuten: And so, this finally came to pass

Randy Tuten: Now this is a good example of the art, you see this color right here? When you put a piece of artwork in the computer to separate it, the computer has difficulty telling orange and red apart. And so you literally have to go into the computer and tell it to take the magenta out of the orange, cause it will turn orange into a red, that warm red I was talking about. A computer can not distinguish between orange and red.

Michael Erlewine: Interesting. I didn't know that.

Randy Tuten: Oh yeah, and so in this poster, these are clearly orange on the art.

Michael Erlewine: Absolutely.

Randy Tuten: And because there's so much red on this it, actually seeped into that color. But also, the pink lettering had more of a frosty feel to it, opposed to some of this stuff closed up pretty good.

Michael Erlewine: That's nice, that's one of my favorite ones, I don't know why it just makes me feel... it's a fun one.

Randy Tuten: Oh, the EmmyLou Harris poster, and she actually signed one to me. She said that it was the nicest poster her name had ever appeared on.

Randy Tuten: And there's that Vargas girl. I actually did this in black and white, and Jim Phillips in Santa Cruz colored it, I went down there we worked on it one night. This was a gorgeous poster, Pete Townsend, you know.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah that's a beautiful poster

Randy Tuten: You know, the Bill Graham people wanted something psychedelic, and I said, well, Pete Townsend is not exactly Mr. Psychedelic. He's kinda' like a Bob Dylan -- voice of the conscience from the 60's, on the English side. So I said, you need something a little bit classy for him. And so, then I designed this thing and then they said now give him a gold suit, and I said well he's not exactly Elvis Presley either. So they were real nervous about this, and then when Pete saw this, he loved it. And then the Bill Graham people were fine with it.

Michael Erlewine: And this. You've done this kind of thing. It's very rich and beautiful.

Randy Tuten: A lot of times, there's no time to develop a really interesting design, so a lot of the time, you just use a color combinations, and nice lettering, and just some basic design element that has nothing to do with the band. See, that idea is to.. the poster thing was always supposed to be where you stopped people, because it's a nice looking poster, to read the poster.

So over the years, people have gotten more in a hurry, and you have to read posters in a hurry. Well, that's the wrong attitude, you know. You make it's nice enough where people stop and they'll say " Well, what is that? Let's look at this." A good example the Skull and Roses, you know. It is still a great looking poster, 30 years after the show. And it's hard to beat.

Michael Erlewine: And this is classic. It's really nice.

Randy Tuten: Oh the Pete Townsend came out absolutely gorgeous. Yeah, and it wasn't bright colors. It was just gold and like three different blues.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: Well it's, you know, UK right? Well those guys are pretty cool, and here you go again. This is that same effect and it's very effective.

Randy Tuten: Yeah. When in doubt, you just do nice colorful things like the Joan Osborne poster a design on it aimed towards her.

Michael Erlewine: I don't think anyone does this effect better than you do. It's really gorgeous.

Randy Tuten: Well, thank you.

Michael Erlewine: Absolutely, and Gary Grimshaw has done a couple of things similar, but these are all wonderful.

Randy Tuten: Bammy Awards in San Francisco. See, now here's another good example. This is clearly red fading to purple, with orange around it. The original art, you can see that easily. On the printed one here, it came out fairly bad print job.

Michael Erlewine: Hmm. Still looks pretty nice.

Randy Tuten: It looks good, but you know all those things make a difference.

Michael Erlewine: So, you just seem to have a real knack for this group of colors. I mean these are effective, but this is like really, really special.

Randy Tuten: Through art history, the most popular colors are, have been yellow, red and orange.

Michael Erlewine: I love oranges and reds and yellows.

Randy Tuten: People tend to over the years, advertisers want something bright. It shows up, so the first reaction is orange red and yellow -- circus colors. Green is probably the least used color.

Michael Erlewine: I love green. I wear green. It's my favorite color.

Randy Tuten: Well, green is a great color, but you've got to use it right or else it'll come out bad. I'll show you an example of a bad poster. You saw these, the three of them?

For Joe Walsh, I didn't know what to do, so we just did ... since he's kind of a crazy guy, we just did kind of a crazy-watercolor poster.

Michael Erlewine: This is such a gorgeous thing.

Randy Tuten: The only time Bob Dylan and his son's band, the Wallflowers, played together. I went to the show. I thought they would at least come out and do a song with each other.

Michael Erlewine: But they didn't?

Randy Tuten: But they didn't.

Michael Erlewine: I saw him recently, Bob Dylan, and he was good,

Randy Tuten: Oh yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Cause some recent years, he has been not so good.

Randy Tuten: Now the fact that he won the academy award, I think is just spectacular.

Michael Erlewine: Did you see that?

Randy Tuten: Oh yeah, it was great.

Michael Erlewine: He turned into a regular person, after he got the award.

Randy Tuten: The highlight of the show.

Michael Erlewine: Amen. It was so great! And the shots they had of his eyes were just too much. Right?

Randy Tuten: Yeah

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: I just laughed! Here we are again. Here are the same colors. This is just so rich. I've seen all these. These are great. Yeah, this might be one of my favorite posters of all time.

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: This is one you know.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well this is that same thing we were looking, the same color. Here you've done it. You've laid this back. You know, it's not so out-front, but its so... I'll say this is one, when I brought my music company AMG down to the Ann Arbor offices, I put it in the main room, where we met, on the wall -- framed and matted. It's just so great. I thank you for that. That's just so great!

Randy Tuten: You're welcome.

Randy Tuten: I can, you know what I've never sold one of these posters, cause who would care about Eastern Acoustic Works celebrates 20 years at this point.

Randy Tuten: Tom Waits poster, very popular poster.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, oh it is.

Randy Tuten: Wherever he goes, it rains piano keys, cause he's a piano player.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah (laughs) right.

Randy Tuten: I did this for the Playboy Mansion for the Brian Setzer Orchestra.

Michael Erlewine: Wow, that's neat.

Randy Tuten: it came out pretty good. Hugh Hefner actually called me up and wanted twenty of them. So they're selling.

Michael Erlewine: And there's that ribbon effect again. See it works very nice.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, anytime you're dealing with a whole lot of lettering, you

can use a ribbon, and this is for a school, so you use balloons. This is the Santana, BGSE #23

Randy Tuten: Here's the album cover I did for the Persuasions. And it's a little crate. This whole thing is reproduced on a little crate, and if you go small enough it's reproduced again.

Michael Erlewine: Now that, a computer does that, cool that's great.

Randy Tuten: And that was the album cover for the Grateful Dead. They actually used tie-dye thing and they tried to use some computerized font over the tie-dye, and it did not work. It just all melted together, so when you're using tie-die, you've got to use some lettering that's not rigid, that's floating. So you get that feel.

Randy Tuten: And that was the Stoned Immaculate cover. They used a Rick Griffin image and I just did...

Randy Tuten: So, I'm always looking to make my stuff better, if that's what you're asking.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I think that you succeeded by doing that.

Randy Tuten: Any artist that thinks, commercial art and fine art, and I'm talking about painters. Generally, when painters make a name for themselves, it's not permanent, but it's more consistent, more famous. I mean that's loosely based, you know. When I say famous, I'm not talking about "stars in your eye" or that kind of thing. Established. I guess "established" would be a better word. Commercial artists kind of gotta' do it every day. Because when you're a commercial artist, if you don't do anything for 10 years, nobody knows about you.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: I just had the opportunity to photo-document about 1,000 pieces, many of Gary Grimshaw, from the collection at the Bentley Historical Library. In fact, I don't know of any artist that's done more work than he has, because in the mid-west, they didn't get any of the ambiance of the whole scene, in terms of money. He had to work, always. And he worked mostly for the community, the alternative community, and there're just thousands, hundreds and hundreds, of pieces, not all of them are great, of course, but most of them are very interesting.

But not every artist has done this much stuff. I mean, out of all the artists here, the big name ones like Stanley Mouse and so forth have done a lot of work, but not at the quantity level of Gary Grimshaw, I mean in terms of sheer output.

Randy Tuten: Well, I guess you're right. Mouse does a lot of variations. In other words, in the 50's, he was doing T-shirts and car things, you know, so he wasn't always a poster artist. It's like he's an artist more so, than a poster artist. Whereas, I feel I'm just a poster artist, rather than just an artist.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, he did. Here is another one that's also very nice

Randy Tuten: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Are you, so you just kinda' had a thing with The Doors.

Randy Tuten: That's BG-219. A pretty rare poster.

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Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I can see that.

Randy Tuten: And it murdered the poster. But the BG-281.

Rick Griffin

Randy Tuten: I didn't meet them early. I met them later on, but I used to see Rick's stuff in the surfer magazine, cause I surfed in Southern California, when I was down there.

Michael Erlewine: Oh really, and what are some examples of the Rick's stuff that you personally like? What do you think is his best stuff? I mean people like the Aoxomoxoa?

!P CP005808 " Rick Griffin's Aoxomoxoa"

Randy Tuten: Yeah, Aoxomoxoa is beautiful, but the Aoxomoxoa poster from Hawaii is actually better, but you know always, each to his own. I mean Rick actually thought that the Jimmy Hendrix eyeball was an albatross around his neck, cause that's all people ever wanted to talk about.

!P CP005895 " Rick Griffin's Hawaii Aoxomoxoa"

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, very recognizable.

Randy Tuten: And so, they'd always want him to paint that or draw that.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Randy Tuten: So, he always felt that was an albatross around his neck. But what pieces of Rick's did I think? All his stuff is great. The heart and torch in hand for Big Brother is incredible. I used to have that art work.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, that's wonderful.

Randy Tuten: But I traded it somewhere along the line.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, and so those guys influenced me, but there were record cover things that... I mean I like some of the R&B boxing poster style stuff too, just the block lettering stuff. I always liked that stuff, so there's a vast array of poster designs you can apply to things.

Michael Erlewine: Did any of the artists take you under their wing? Who befriended you, if any?

Randy Tuten: Yeah. Nobody befriended me really.

Michael Erlewine: Was there a mentor among the group?

Randy Tuten: No. I mean I had a few mentors, but they were just all in my mind.

Michael Erlewine: (laughs) Ok.

Randy Tuten: Certainly no one came along and helped me.

Michael Erlewine: Right, and did you ever become friendly, I mean, you met all of them eventually and

Randy Tuten: Well, I feel like I'm friends with Stanley Mouse and I was certainly

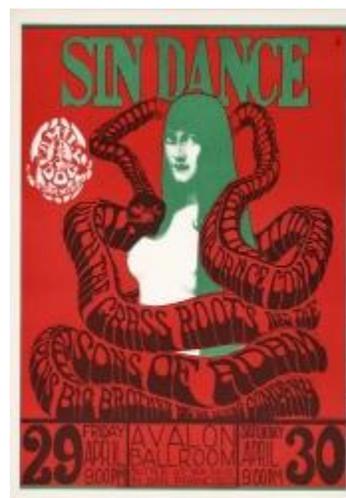
friends with Rick Griffin and friends with Alton Kelley...

Michael Erlewine: What about Wes Wilson? Did you meet him? Did you get along with him?

Randy Tuten: I got along with him Ok. I was never really a big fan of Wes' work. I liked a lot of his stuff and his best pieces I think are the Paul Butterfield Blues Band with the hand on the head. And the Lenny Bruce, I think, is a just a really incredible design and there was something...oh, the "Sin Dance."



Butterfield Blues Band FD-003



Sin Dance FD-006

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

You know there's certain pieces that are more commercial. You know Wes always liked his paintings, always thought his paintings were the best thing about him. I always thought his paintings were lackluster, compared to some of the posters that he designed. Yeah, I like a lot of his posters.

Michael Erlewine: How did you get out of the scene? You did a lot with Bill Graham, but you didn't do much with Chet Helms. Is that right?

Randy Tuten: Well, you know, when I first came back to San Francisco, in January of 1967, on a permanent basis, I tried to work for the Family Dog for a year. This is kind of a known story; it's been published before. Jaxon, who was the art director of the Family Dog at the time, a cartoonist guy, and an artist in his own right, was the art director there and I always tried to work for them for a year, and they just constantly rejected my efforts.

Michael Erlewine: And you were doing your kind of stuff then?

Randy Tuten: It really wasn't my kinda' stuff. It was just like a mish-mosh, I would describe myself as a mish-mosh of different successful styles over the years.

Michael Erlewine: You're very flexible.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, whether it be like when you when you want to use a graphic woman on a poster. It's hard to beat a Vargas-type-looking girl. You know, that's just some gorgeous looking stuff. And so I would certainly use a Vargas type style to depict a woman.

Michael Erlewine: No, you're very good. One of the things that I learned putting my database together is when I finally got all these images and I was ready to

sort them, and I'd never been able to see a whole groups of things and then I went through your group of things and I was saying " Wow I didn't realize how many different styles that you did, like superb work in. it's just that's 'that' style and that's really good. So I don't think anyone else has as many style as you've done, to my knowledge.

Randy Tuten: Yeah, the thing that I really like the most is lettering,

Michael Erlewine: Really?

Randy Tuten: That's really what I like. A lot of the times people will be after me to do a poster for them, for no particular thing, just a poster, a nice looking poster. Well, I have a difficulty doing just a nice looking poster, because it's not an advertising thing. I always felt that I was an advertising artist.

Michael Erlewine: Right, and what was your particular interest in letters? What type of letters do you lean toward?

Randy Tuten: There's not any one particular type of lettering that I lean toward... whatever looks good. Whether it be a western style or psychedelic style or exploding lettering or melting lettering or whatever works on the poster.

Michael Erlewine: What venues are you doing things for now? I know you've kept busy. You're stuff still just keeps appearing.

Randy Tuten: Well, I'm working for the Rolling Rock people, back in Pennsylvania now. I'm doing a lot of album covers, I still work for the Grateful Dead occasionally. I still occasionally do some stuff for Bill Graham, but when they SFX people bought the Bill Graham company, that, along with Bill's death, kind of changed everything.

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, I think so,

Randy Tuten: Not immediately, but certainly...

Michael Erlewine: They bought up everything in our area as well. What are the areas that you feel have never been covered about your life, your art, you know when people... I know that interviews have been done and stuff. I've read some material on you. What stuff do you feel is not covered and you know what questions should I be asking that I'm not? I don't know you as well as some of the other artists.

Randy Tuten: I wouldn't know how to answer that right off the bat here. What things about me are not known, is what you're saying?

Michael Erlewine: Yeah or ought to be more out, better understood?

Commercial Artist

Randy Tuten: Well, you know, for a long time I always felt that artists that were painters or poets, that kind of stuff was kind of like a cerebral side of the art world, and that I really viewed the commercial advertising side as a different side of the art world. But over the years, a number of people have changed my opinion about that.

Michael Erlewine: I mean like how do you feel now?

Randy Tuten: It's Ok for other people to call me an artist, but I've never felt like I was an artist myself.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, part of my function I hope is to help people to understand, you know. We talked about the memorabilia art before.

Memorabilia's been covered. It's not like I deny that. I think that a lot of the stuff is more affordable; affordable,

appreciable, collectable art, that you know, as far as I'm concerned is dirt-cheap. Just from the collector's point of view.

Randy Tuten: I guess what I'd have to say about that is I've never felt like that I was someone who did collectable stuff. I'm someone that does advertising, a commercial artist, if you will.

It's like the things I work on are fairly selective. Obviously, you don't see me doing stuff for a lot of punk bands or you know new-wave music, just cause I don't feel that comfortable around them. Not that there's anything wrong with them, but I think they'd probably be better served by getting some other graphic artist to do something for them.

Michael Erlewine: Someone that's in synch with them.

Randy Tuten: You know someone like Frank Kozik's style, or like a lot of these new bands and artists, nowadays. They want this flash; they want to make some kind of a statement, rather than just being ...I guess I would probably describe my stuff as... I like to do stuff that looks good, but is in good taste.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well I think you, of all the artists I've had these discussions, you are most consistent, over the length of your career. You're still producing top rate art, some of the other artists are and some of them are not. Some of them peaked or whatever. You haven't really had a peak. Your work is just very steady.

Randy Tuten: Consistent, it's called. (laughs)

MUSIC FAVS

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well that's hard to find and interesting. What kind of

Classic Posters Interview with Randy Tuten by Michael Erlewine

music do you like at this time in your life?

Randy Tuten: Well I like everything, I certainly like early jazz. I mean early like New Orleans... Louis Armstrong, Cab Calloway, even swing, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller. I certainly like folk music from the 50's. I certainly like surf music a lot from the 60's. I always thought that surf music was kind of simple and easy, but it is actually so simple, that the people that do it, have to be more precise.

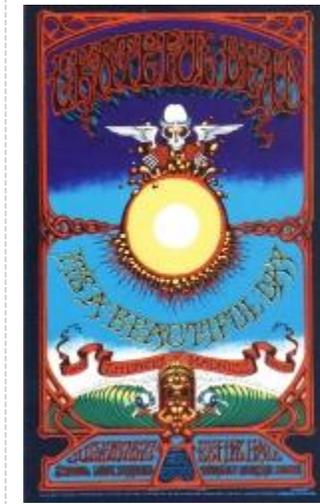
Michael Erlewine: I saw Brian Wilson, when he came back on that short tour. I saw his first performance of that tour. It was a really awesome experience,

Randy Tuten: Brian Wilson. I don't really view him as a surf musician. He's kind of like... when the Beatles did Sgt. Peppers Lonely Hearts Club. It was completely different; every time the people would write the Beatles off, they'd invent something new.

Michael Erlewine: They did.

Randy Tuten: Not new, but just different. It was new too, but it was different and, you know, excited the people too -- excitement kind of thing.

Michael Erlewine: Indeed they did.



*Rick Griffin's Hawaiiin
Aoxomoxoa*

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