

The music industry

Thursday, 29 September 2011

I was lucky enough to live as a teenager during the best time for music.

But whilst we all know the stories of my friends from the 60s - Beatles, Stones, Hendrix etc - and the way they transformed the world with their superb, mass appeal music, people tend to forget the pioneers who were behind the scenes.

From Brian Epstein to Sir Edward Lewis (my friend and mentor); these were the individuals who gave us the structure (much of it wrong or foolish) that conquered the globe throughout the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s.

I lived through that and contributed to it; the industry was a positive, forward looking, exciting universe. Sadly these days - there are virtually no such positive figures involved. Simon Cowell, like his music or hate it, has invigorated the second rate covers area - hey, it's still music. Richard Russell - the only other executive we respected in the 90s - has developed XL into a phenomenal force. But even my old friends Clive Davis, Doug Morris, Barry Weiss, Lyor Cohen have lost the spark they used to have as they have aged and turned dull.

Interesting, by the way, that all those four shared one ability (as do Simon and Richard) - they genuinely adored music.

These days I very much get the feeling that the top executives only care about their own careers as they preside over a dying world. Instead of pushing forward, encouraging, giving new direction and fresh impetus - they are keeping their heads down and avoiding notice (rather like politicians). God forbid they should do something spectacular in case the tabloids criticise them.

Sad.