



Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess

By Walter Yetnikoff, David Ritz

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Show biz memoir at its name-dropping, bridge-burning, profane best: the music industry's most outspoken, outrageous, and phenomenally successful executive delivers a rollicking memoir of pop music's heyday.

During the 1970s and '80s the music business was dominated by a few major labels and artists such as Michael Jackson, Bruce Springsteen, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Billy Joel, Paul Simon, Barbra Streisand and James Taylor. They were all under contract to CBS Records, making it the most successful label of the era. And, as the company's president, Walter Yetnikoff was the ruling monarch. He was also the most flamboyant, volatile and controversial personality to emerge from an industry and era defined by sex, drugs and debauchery.

Having risen from working-class Brooklyn and the legal department of CBS, Yetnikoff, who freely admitted to being tone deaf, was an unlikely label head. But he had an uncanny knack for fostering talent and intimidating rivals with his appalling behavior—usually fueled by an explosive combination of cocaine and alcohol. His tantrums, appetite for mind-altering substances and sexual exploits were legendary. In Japan to meet the Sony executives who acquired CBS during his tenure, Walter was assigned a minder who confined him to a hotel room. True to form, Walter raided the minibar, got blasted and, seeing no other means of escape, opened a hotel window and vented his rage by literally howling at the moon.

In *Howling at the Moon*, Yetnikoff traces his journey as he climbed the corporate mountain, danced on its summit and crashed and burned. We see how Walter became the father-confessor to Michael Jackson as the King of Pop reconstructed his face and agonized over his image while constructing *Thriller* (and how, after it won seven Grammys, Jackson made the preposterous demand that Walter take producer Quincy Jones's name *off* the album); we see Walter, in maniacal pursuit of a contract, chase the Rolling Stones around the world and nearly come to blows with Mick Jagger in the process; we get the tale of how Walter and Marvin Gaye—fresh from the success of “Sexual Healing”—share the same woman, and of how Walter bonds with Bob Dylan because of their mutual Jewishness. At the

same time we witness Yetnikoff's clashes with Barry Diller, David Geffen, Tommy Mottola, Allen Grubman and a host of others. Seemingly, the more Yetnikoff feeds his cravings for power, sex, liquor and cocaine, the more profitable CBS becomes—from \$485 million to well over \$2 billion—until he finally succumbs, ironically, not to substances, but to a corporate coup. Reflecting on the sinister cycle that left his career in tatters and CBS flush with cash, Yetnikoff emerges with a hunger for redemption and a new reverence for his working-class Brooklyn roots.

Ruthlessly candid, uproariously hilarious and compulsively readable, *Howling at the Moon* is a blistering *You'll Never Eat Lunch in this Town Again* of the music industry.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This memoir by Yetnikoff, the former president of CBS Records, may lead to hipsters changing the phrase "partying like a rock star" to "partying like the president of a record label." After joining CBS in 1962, Yetnikoff, who guided the careers of Bob Dylan, Barbra Streisand, Bruce Springsteen and Billy Joel, among others, became addicted to power, sex, drugs and alcohol as he gave himself over to the everything-in-excess rock and roll lifestyle. Recruited to CBS by fellow lawyer and future music mogul Clive Davis, Yetnikoff, with the help of right-hand man Tommy Mottola, alternated between swinging deals and pissing off a who's who of entertainment's elite including Michael Eisner, David Geffen, Michael Ovitz and Steve Ross. Though once in a while it feels as if he is a name dropper of the highest level, Yetnikoff shows an unguarded side of musicians that the public rarely sees. Similarly, he sometimes still feels the need to prove he did the most coke or had the most sex, but for the most part the story of his downward spiral, which leads to losing his job and family and brings him to the edge of death, is captivating and even occasionally touching. Thanks to coauthor and music writer Ritz, the book maintains its fast pace and conversational style from start to finish so that, in the end, Yetnikoff's raucous life story becomes a cautionary tale, with a steady backbeat. Photos. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

"A deliciously decadent read." —*People*

"A dizzying ride on the turntable of life."
—*New York Times*

"Few record-company heads have written autobiographies, and fewer still have penned ones as candid as *Howling at the Moon* . . . Yetnikoff knows what readers want."
—*Entertainment Weekly*

"Brisk, uncensored and often hilarious . . . highly entertaining."
—*Kirkus Reviews*

"An un-put-downable repository of A-list gossip and narco-fueled weirdness."
—*Blender*

From the Inside Flap

he music industry's most outspoken, outrageous, and phenomenally successful executive delivers a rollicking memoir of pop music's heyday.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Margaret Morales:

Have you spare time to get a day? What do you do when you have far more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a stroll, shopping, or went to typically the Mall. How about open or even read a book titled *Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess*? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with their opinion or you have other opinion?

Lavonne Yates:

This book untitled *Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess* to be one of several books which best seller in this year, that's because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit into it. You will easily to buy this specific book in the book retail outlet or you can order it through online. The publisher of this book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, because you can read this book in your Mobile phone. So there is no reason to you personally to past this publication from your list.

David Clark:

This Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess is brand-new way for you who has fascination to look for some information given it relief your hunger of knowledge. Getting deeper you in it getting knowledge more you know otherwise you who still having little bit of digest in reading this Howling at the Moon: The Odyssey of a Monstrous Music Mogul in an Age of Excess can be the light food for yourself because the information inside this particular book is easy to get by simply anyone. These books create itself in the form and that is reachable by anyone, that's why I mean in the e-book contact form. People who think that in publication form make them feel sleepy even dizzy this e-book is the answer. So there is not any in reading a guide especially this one. You can find actually looking for. It should be here for you actually. So , don't miss the idea! Just read this e-book variety for your better life along with knowledge.

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