

Promoting for the Stars: The Man Behind the Music

Len Triola has promoted some of the biggest names in the music industry in jazz, big band and standards.

by Brian Radewitz
Editor

Over the past 25 years Wantagh resident Len Triola has promoted music for some of the best jazz, big band and standards musicians in the world. He also owns one of the biggest sports and music memorabilia collections in the world. Triola recently caught up with Wantagh Life to talk about his career and the ever-changing music industry.

Q: What initially drew you to music?

My interest in music goes back to when I was a young kid growing up in Astoria. My father was a great connoisseur of all types of music and I loved sitting with him and spinning records. When I got out of high school, I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I knew that I had a passion for music, for American standards and Jazz.

How did you get into the promotional side?

I worked at the New York Post in the 1980's as a "copy boy" and then I got a job at the now defunct WNEW-AM, 1130

AM, as the music programmer, where I had the great honor of meeting so many musical talents such as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Steve and Eydie Gorme, Rosemarie Clooney, Dinah Shore, Johnny Ray, Johnny Mathis, Nancy Wilson, Henry Mancini, Jerry Vale, Jimmy Roselli, etc. Mostly all of the artists that stopped by WNEW-AM had one common problem, which was "I don't know how to promote my new song, my new album to radio." So the idea came to me, after WNEW-AM went off the air, to start my own music promotional business for these artists.

What drew you to jazz, big band, etc. instead of other forms of music?

Having grown up in a household where this music was played on a daily basis by my father (jazz, big band, standards), I had an immediate love for it. There was nothing like holding a vinyl record in your hands and then putting it on the turntable.

Do you have a favorite artist or band?

I would have to say, without a doubt in my mind, that Frank Sinatra is one of my favorites as well as the Count Basie Orchestra.

How does it feel to see the end result, when an artist or their album gets recognized and you had a part in bringing that product to the masses?

It is a great feeling to know that I helped a great musical talent get the recognition that they deserve. I've worked on more than 4,500 CDs of some great talents that have won Oscar, Grammy and Emmy Awards, such as Sammy Cahn,

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Len Triola poses for a photo with Ron Della Chiesa.
Photo courtesy of Len Triola



Len Triola shakes hands with Tina Sinatra.
Photo courtesy of Len Triola



Len Triola grabs a photo with Jazz Bo Williams.

Photo courtesy of Len Triola

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Nancy LaMott, Cybill Shepherd, Dixie Carter, the Count Basie Orchestra, Betty Buckley, Robert Davi, Daniel Benzali, Kathie Lee Gifford, Margaret Whiting, Rosemarie Clooney, Perry Como, Mel Torme, Peter Marshall, etc.

How much has the business changed over the years?

The business has changed, but one has to be flexible and grow with the changing music industry. It's been 25 years since I started this business, but the one thing that will not

Promoting big time musicians.

25

The number of years that Len Triola has spent in the music industry promoting artists and their music.

change is the need for a musical talent to be heard, whether via the internet, commercial radio, etc. These artists need help in getting their music to the right people for air time and interviews.

Has social media made your job a lot harder since many artists can promote themselves on Twitter, Facebook, etc.?

The one thing that holds true is that you need to have the right contacts all over the country, and the world, to promote your name and your music.

How did you get connected to the sports industry and what have you done in that area?

In the 1980's while at WNEW-AM, the late sports director, John Kennelly, gave me the job of boxing correspondent covering matches live from Atlantic City and Las Vegas and doing on-air segments about the matches with my opinion on the fights. I also wrote a column back in the 1980's for Irv Abrams' Florida-based boxing magazine "Boxing World." I have interviewed many of the great boxers, including Iran Barkley, Jake LaMotta, Rocky Graziano, Sugar Ray Leonard, Tommy Hears, Joe Frazier and did the very last interview with Sugar Ray Robinson.

Do you have any advice for someone looking to get into the promoting business?



Len Triola poses for a photo with former boxer Iran Barkley.
Photo courtesy of Len Triola

It is all in who you know and how good you are at socializing and building your contacts in the industry you choose.

Any advice for aspiring musicians?

The good, old-fashioned advice is the best advice for aspiring musicians. You must work hard, stay true, never give up and have an open mind to learn all types of music, and not just be a one trick pony. Not only do I promote CDs for musicians, but I also book live musical acts in clubs in New York City, California, London, etc. I also work with a show that travels around the USA and Europe called "The Men and Women Who Worked with Sinatra" that can be seen at many universities and performing art centers. I also collaborate with the great sportscaster Sal Marciano for documentaries on sports legends and research sports information for him.

What's next for you?

Sometime in 2014, I will be working on the Soccer Conference at Hofstra University helping get writers and guests and players to attend. In 2015, at Hofstra, I will be working on the Presidential Conference on George W. Bush.

Triola On Wantagh

Len Triola has lived in the town for 37 years and has a few favorite places to listen to music and eat.

Favorite spot in town

There is a place in Wantagh called "Hemingways" and I like to occasionally stop by with a client for a meeting and a bite to eat.

Local places to listen to music

The most wonderful places to see concerts for great jazz and standards are Hofstra University as well as Molloy College. There are so many talented musicians that may not be known by name, but they keep the music alive by participating in concerts at these colleges. There are also concerts performed at a great deal of libraries on Long Island for free.

Memorabilia

I own one of the biggest sports and music memorabilia collections in the country, having thousands of CDs, vinyl records and books on sports and music legends.

For more information on Len Triola, visit his website at lentiola.com.



Len Triola and Lester Lanin pose for a photo together.
Photo courtesy of Len Triola

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