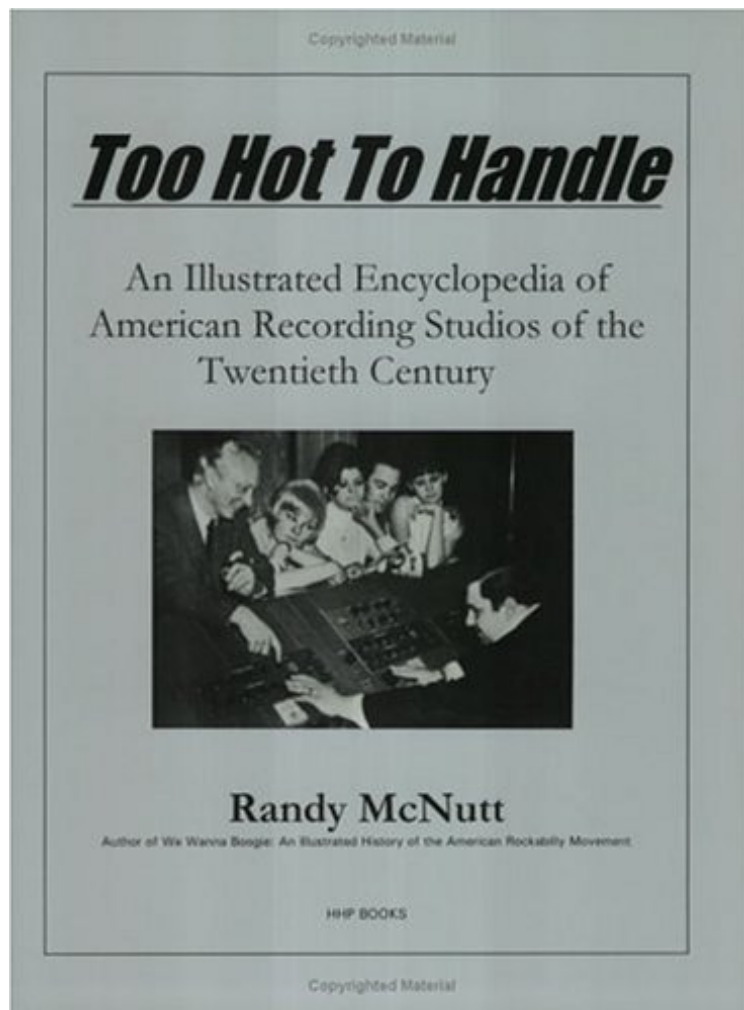


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## Too Hot to Handle: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Recording Studios of the 20th Century

Randy McNutt

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**Randy McNutt : Too Hot to Handle: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Recording Studios of the 20th Century** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Too Hot to Handle: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Recording Studios of the 20th Century:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Badly in need of an updateBy Luigi FacottiAn interesting book that covers the stories of many famous- as well as less known recording studios. Obviously the book is way out of date but its a nice historical perspective with a few interesting insights. The information contained in the vignettes for each studio is inconsistent - some have the famous hits coming from a studio listed, others don't, some run for a page or

more, some just a paragraph. Book would benefit from an update - especially as it has moved from being topical to historical - more photos, consistent content and much better design - Hal Leonard does great job in the latter category. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Old Studios Make Great Reading By Sterling E. Price The author makes a major contribution to the field of music history and recording by combining the music (by this I mean the songs and the stories behind them) with the studios and their individual histories. It is a successful marriage of scholarship and pop culture. Although he discusses the major studios in large cities, the book's real strength lies in its exploration of the smaller, out-of-the-way studios. The writer has done his homework; the result is significant. Of course, he does not list every old studio in America; he does not need to. As it is, he expertly processes literally thousands bits of information to form a musical mosaic. Actually, I would like to have seen even more of the smaller studios listed, but, with a book of about 224 pages in larger format size, I cannot fault his efforts. His use of primary sources will be invaluable to future researchers. This allows the principals to tell their stories without interference. Also of interest is the detailed listing of equipment in hundreds of large and tiny studios across America, all evidently pieced together through trade magazine stories, liner notes, and personal interviews. I am surprised by the many smaller studios that possessed Ampex equipment as early as 1952. No wonder the old recordings sound so good. -- Sterling E. Price, Ph.D; Brooklyn, NY 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Too Hot to Handle By John Thomason This book answers a question that I have been wondering about for a long time. What ever happened to the Huey Meaux studio down in Houston. I love his old records. Guess Huey's personal life is his own, but I prefer to concentrate on the music, not hte people who make it. I could recommend this book to anybody who likes the old music, like me, because it is packed with tons of old studios and songs that you don't hear much about. Another old studio I like is AMERICAN in Memphis, where Elvis did Kentucky Rain. If you have heard of it, you can find the story in this book and even an interview with Dan Penn. THE guy is way too good.

Throughout the 20th century, American recording studios turned out some of the world's greatest hits. Now Randy McNutt, an award-winning journalist and record producer, lists more than 500 of them while recalling their unusual stories. "Too Hot" is the first book to list many of America's smaller but successful regional studios as well as the larger national ones. As Marc Bristol, editor-publisher of Blue Suede News, says of the book: "The stories of the places where the records were made are just as interesting as those of the bands and artists." For the author, heaven is finding another old two-track studio and a veteran recording engineer who's willing to talk about its heyday. McNutt interviews dozens of recording engineers, studio owners, label executives, musicians, singers, songwriters, music publishers, and other talented people who personally provided much of the information about their historic studios. In this indispensable reference work aimed at music fans, historians, and recording enthusiasts, McNutt interviews studio owners from Maine to California to learn about their rooms, hits, innovative recording techniques, and, of course, their challenges. (The story about crickets living in the old echo chamber of Cinderella Sound is worth the price of the book.) McNutt also details the types of recording equipment, studio addresses, kinds of echo chambers, studio quirks, and whatever other important information he can find. A strength of the book is its large listing of studios from the 1950s to the 1970s, including the hit factories ABC Recording (later Lion Share) in Los Angeles, American Recording in Memphis, Amigo in L.A., Electric Lady in New York, Motown in Detroit, Sun in Memphis, and other seminal recording sites. But readers particularly enjoy reading about the many smaller, unsung studios, including the Music Factory in Miami, Jewel and King in Cincinnati, Accurate Sound in San Angelo, Tx., Royal in Memphis, Sambo Sound in Louisville, Ruby in Hamilton, Ohio, Norman Petty Studios in Clovis, N.M., Original Sound in L.A., Norfolk Sound, Norala Sound in Sheffield, Ala., Kin-Tel in Atlanta, Cliff Herring Sound in Fort Worth, Counterpart in Cincinnati, Cinderella in Madison, Tn., Jim Beck Studio in Dallas, Beautiful Sounds in Memphis, J.D. Miller Recording in Crowley, La., Sea-Saint in New Orleans, Suma in Painesville, Ohio, Link Wray's Shack Three-Track in Maryland, Fred Foster Sound in Nashville, Associated Recording in New York, Studio By The Pond in Hendersonville, Tenn., and others in out-of-the-way places that have cut their grooves into recording history. McNutt talks to more than 150 people involved with historic studios, including: recording engineer Lee Hazen ("Then You Can Tell Me Goodbye,") singers such as Billy Joe Royal, Roy Head, Malcomb Yelvington, Ray Scott, and Dickey Lee; King Records engineer Chuck Seitz, legendary New Orleans engineer Cosimo Matassa, Cleveland DJ Bill Randall, Ace Record chief John Vincent, engineer-musician Jimmy Johnson of Muscle Shoals; the engineers Bill Halverson (L.A.), Ken Hamann (Cleveland Recording), Robin "Hood" Brians (Tyler, Tx.), mastering engineer Larry Boden, Ron Newdoll (engineer of "Last Kiss" at Accurate Sound), and Phil Kaye (ABC). This thorough and detailed book consists of 224 pages, 8.5-x-11 inches, softbound, with a tough cover and about 20 pages of photos, ads, and illustrations relating to the original studios. Made in the United States by Thomson-Shore, one of America's finest book printers, "Too Hot to Handle" is built to last and will remain a collector's item for anyone who cares about America's recording history.

"A wonderul book. I highly recommend it. McNutt has these old studios down to their last tube." -- Shad O'Shea, owner, Fraternity Records "With accuracy and skill, Randy McNutt shows how small studios created world-class

sounds. A major achievement." -- Wayne Perry, hit Nashville songwriter, Sept. 2001....Many of these places were funky buildings pressed into service as studios because there were records to be made. -- Larry Crane, Tape Op, August 2001  
If there ever was inspiration for me to keep my little studio alive, this book is it. -- Larry Crane, Tape Op  
Randy has searched out many old studios and talked to a good number of engineers, musicians, and studio owners. -- Tape Op, August 2001  
This book features all the studios I grew up with--FAME, Muscle Shoals Sound, Motown, and dozens of others. -- Wayne Perry, hit songwriter for Lorrie Morgan, Backstreet Boys, and other hit acts  
From the Publisher  
"Too Hot to Handle: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of American Recording Studios of the 20th Century" is published by HHP Books, which publishes Randy McNutt's seminal rockabilly book, "We Wanna Boogie: An Illustrated History of the American Rockabilly Movement." It is also sold through .com. Founded in 1981, The Hamilton Hobby Press is dedicated to serving the collector and historian. It is based in Hamilton, Ohio.  
From the Author  
"While I was writing 'Too Hot to Handle,' I wanted to create the studio version of my book 'We Wanna Boogie.' That is, I wanted to give the large-format book the feel and look of a fanzine, packed with information on the smaller studios that contributed to the American music scene. I love the smaller, unheralded studios like Royal in Memphis. Everyone knows about storied past of the major studios, but few people know how creative people, working in small- and medium-size communities, made many of the hits we love today, including 'Last Kiss,' 'Games People Play,' 'Sea of Love' and hundreds of others. So I set out to find where the hits came from. Working on the project for over 10 years, I learned the sizes of the studios, the house musicians and songwriters, the type of recording equipment, and other interesting facts. The book is my tribute to independent recording engineers and producers from every small town in America."--Randy McNutt