



## Godfather of the Music Business: Morris Levy (American Made Music Series)

By Richard Carlin

University Press of Mississippi. Hardcover. Condition: New. 304 pages. This biography tells the story of one of the most notorious figures in the history of popular music, Morris Levy (1927-1990). At age nineteen, he cofounded the nightclub Birdland in Hells Kitchen, which became the home for a new musical style, bebop. Levy operated one of the first integrated clubs on Broadway and helped build the careers of Dizzy Gillespie and Bud Powell and most notably aided the reemergence of Count Basie. In 1957, he founded a record label, Roulette Records. Roulette featured many of the significant jazz artists who played Birdland but also scored top pop hits with acts like Buddy Knox, Frankie Lymon and the Teenagers, Joey Dee and the Starlites, and, in the mid-1960s, Tommy James. Stories abound of Levy threatening artists, songwriters, and producers, sometimes just for the sport, other times so he could continue to build his empire. Along the way, Levy attracted investors with ties to the Mafia, including Dominic Ciaffone (a. k. a. Swats Mulligan), Tommy Eboli, and the most notorious of them all, Vincent Gigante. Gigante allegedly owned large pieces of Levys recording and retail businesses. Starting in the late 1950s, the FBI...



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