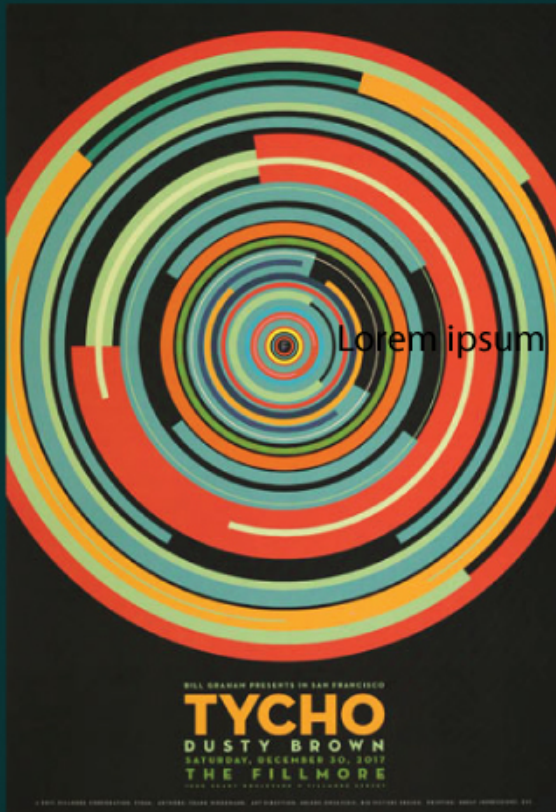


Frank Wiedemann

Interview



Frank Wiedemann

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by

Michael Erlewine

INTRODUCTION

This is not intended to be a finely produced book, but rather a readable document for those who are interested in in this series on concert poster artists and graphic design.

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Interview with Frank Wiedemann

By Michael Erlewine
29 May 2003
Sound recording.

Michael Erlewine: And we'll talk for a little bit. Now you've mostly only done the Filmore stuff, I mean that's interesting.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Looks to me like you came up through a much more cultured, art background than a lot of these guys.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I guess, I mean...

Michael Erlewine: Seems like it.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I went to university and studied graphic design. But I was kind of having problems there, because I only like to do things a little bit, not quite so structured. Back in those days, that was like 1984-1987 that I was there. It was at {RISDI}, the {Rhode Island School of Design}.

There was a bunch of us that were just really all into that kind of stuff and you know we could tell that even though he followed a really basic grid which is what RISDI really taught; you know it's all Swiss design. He certainly broke loose and did some much more beautiful stuff with it. Which the teachers liked, but a lot of the other graphic designs were much more into doing the Swiss design annual report kind of stuff. Then when I left, I tried looking for work in San Francisco, but there was just nothing, you know because my graphic design portfolio tended to be a little more artistic and not so corporate oriented, it was kind

of tough. I ended up working on Haight Street at a coffeehouse for two years.

Michael Erlewine: Oh you did?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: That's cool.

Frank Wiedemann: Well I definitely, I would not trade that for the world [laughs], because through that I actually then went from the coffee stores to other little chotski store across the street and through working on Haight Street, all the people that worked there, kind of hung out together and I ended up going to a lot of shows, meeting a lot of people. And actually one of the people that I met he did a poster for Bill Graham.

Michael Erlewine: Who was it?

Frank Wiedemann: Jason Merceir...M E R C E I R.

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, he does all the posters at the Bean and he actually had a pretty, he broke out and has a pretty successful little art... He was represented by a gallery in San Francisco as well, did some shows.

...and he did that poster and I asked him about how he did that and I got the address of {Arlene Owseichik} at {Bill Graham Presents} and sent her some stuff and then a year and a half later she called me back with {Bob Mould}.

Michael Erlewine: That was the first one.

Frank Wiedemann: That was the first one, yeah. And then I just started doing that and I would love to do more, but you know, I'm not very good at marketing or pushing myself...

Michael Erlewine: But you've done a lot of the {New Filmore}).

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I mean I have all of them.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, wow [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: I mean at some point, I shake my head a little bit over some of them. Yours are beautiful, but some of them are just computer drivel, as far as I'm concerned.

Frank Wiedemann: Like which ones?

Michael Erlewine: Well, I'd have to go through and look. There's some 900 of them in the series.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: I'd have to go through and point them and then I would make no friends anyways, so...

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: But yours are more elegant, like {Randy Chavez}'s are elegant, you know...show some kind of more formal background of some kind. {RISDI} is a very cool school.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Without a doubt, you're lucky to have gone to it.

Frank Wiedemann: Thanks, yeah. No, I think that was a great experience and again that was also one of the reasons I liked all the Quarry-D stuff ?????? because...

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Frank Wiedemann: Because their stuff, at first glance, is very free and very, you know the textured background images and all that, but the type is on a pretty straight grid and you can see that there is definitely, you know... I mean they did great stuff with typography, but it's sort of a balance between, you know something really structured on top of something that's really loose and...

Michael Erlewine: Right, it's a good compromise.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: No, but you came after Bill Graham was gone, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yes.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, just double-checking because I go way back to the beginning.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh wow.

Michael Erlewine: I mean I remember yelling at him and having... no having him yell at me, I don't think I've yelled at him, but I might have.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs]. So you're in...you're from San Francisco or you...?

Michael Erlewine: No, no, I'm from Michigan, but I had lived in Berkeley in 1964 during the Sproul Hall riot and then I came out in 1967 for the "Summer of Love" for the summer, was invited out. A friend of mine had a band called, "The Electric Flag." He invited us out and we played at the Fillmore Auditorium, the Straight Theater and the Matrix, during 1967, which was like the Summer of Love.

Frank Wiedemann: Wow.

Michael Erlewine: So that was very cool, so, in the 60's I made posters, you know cut Rubylith and made my own posters for our band. So I know enough to be dangerous, right?

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: And so I love posters and that's how I got into them, but most of what I am these days is like an Internet content developer and so this is just something I want to do for myself. I've done really large sites. I don't know if you know them? All-Music Guide is the largest music data-site in the world, right? There are hundreds of thousands of albums, all reviewed.

Frank Wiedemann: Somebody was just talking about it. We were just at a barbeque last week and somebody was telling me about it and said you know, you can go on there to look up one thing and then three hours later you're somewhere completely different in the site.

Michael Erlewine: Right. Well I'm the guy that started and developed it.

Frank Wiedemann: That's great.

Michael Erlewine: And now I'm not really retired, but I should be kind of retired, but I'm not and so I want to do posters in the same vein, you know thoroughly, I think I have 30,000 posters about to go up.

Frank Wiedemann: Wow.

Michael Erlewine: I'm really fond of graphic artists, since I was one, but you know not a graphic artist, but a performing artists and these guys, you may be doing

better, but a lot of them are not doing well, even the great ones, they're not... you know some of them can hardly make a living and they're struggling and they're working from dawn to dusk.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: It's not a good thing, like Randy Tuten's a good example.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: He's a good as he ever was and he works around the clock as far as I can tell.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: And he still probably has trouble making ends meet.

Frank Wiedemann: Well it's tough.. I mean, on the poster work alone I would never be able to support myself.

Michael Erlewine: So you do a lot of commercial design, then?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, a lot of commercial stuff that pays the bills.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well that's good.

Frank Wiedemann: And then I'll work nights and weekends to get all this stuff that I really want to do, because I go crazy if I only had the corporate stuff.

Michael Erlewine: Oh you've done some nice book covers and some of the logos are interesting and I like some of the special poster events things too, of course.

Frank Wiedemann: Right. Yeah, that brings up another thing...

Michael Erlewine: What to do about that?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I can send you all the posters, which...I mean how many do you want?

Frank Wiedemann: You know because somebody bought the archive about a year ago.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, the man named Sagan.

Michael Erlewine: Either that or it's good for me to have to deal with it my mind, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right, right.

Michael Erlewine: And some of it's a little sleazy, but so is some poster stuff.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: So, I mean you're stuff is not the tiny bit sleazy, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Well they won't let me be [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Well...Randy Chavez, his stuff is pristine, right? Have you met him?

Frank Wiedemann: No, I haven't.

Michael Erlewine: But do you like his stuff?

Frank Wiedemann: I don't know who does what posters there, that's the problem and I...

Michael Erlewine: Oh, well he does, he did the rhinoceros jumping through a ring of fire one and he did the one of the joker kind of floating in the sky, or no looking at you, he did some beautiful pieces of art.

Frank Wiedemann: The rhinoceros is that like an oversized poster?

Michael Erlewine: Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: And it's like a horizontal poster with the rhinoceros...

Michael Erlewine: Yes.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah, that's beautiful.

Michael Erlewine: Well, see it's a shame that you don't know his whole output.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: I didn't realize that... that's because there's really been no book of it, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: So my site will help that, right? You'll be able to go look at... read about him, the same form you filled out, hopefully he will fill out.... I have to call him. I haven't done it, but he's just like you. He's anxious to have his stuff seen by someone and kind of break out of the Bill Graham thing, I mean not get away from it, but like...

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I'm doing the stuff right now?

Michael Erlewine: I mean you're remark...of the people I've talked to you're the most...the least aware of what else is around you of anyone I've ever talked to.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: I mean I'm talking about art, I mean poster art. You don't even know the stuff within the Bill Graham thing.

Frank Wiedemann: No, I mean the only time I've been at the Filmore and they have a wall with all the posters and I always go look at those and stuff like that, but no I'm pretty...I don't get out much [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: No, and I'm not saying it as a put down.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I'm saying it as a... it's amazing that the community... we don't have the communication developed so that... You should or could know all of his posters and he should know all of yours, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: At least have a chance to look through them and see if you like them.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Anyway, that idea.... So tell me a little bit more about what poster artists do you like that are living today. You have given me some, but I'm going to make you say it again. I mean what inspires you, or anything.

Frank Wiedemann: What inspires...I mean anything...well pop-culture...

Michael Erlewine: So what's that mean to you?

Frank Wiedemann: Mass-marketing [laughs]. You know and that's what I mean by like graphic design and like public art rather than, you know what I call 'precious' art, okay that goes up in a gallery and...

Michael Erlewine: You mean like fine art.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, made for galleries kind.

Michael Erlewine: But isn't that kind of dead?

Frank Wiedemann: Well there are still people...you know Moment and stuff, I don't know I've never really gotten into the whole medium kind of deal. I would rather just be something that's free, that's out there, people, you know, just like what you're doing, the site kind of...people if they like it, they like it and they take it home and the first poster, the Bob Mould??? I didn't go to the show but the next day I went to a movie across the street from the Filmore and I saw one of my posters lying in the street, you know.

Michael Erlewine: Wow.

Frank Wiedemann: Cars had been running all over it and I loved it.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah [laughs].

Frank Wiedemann: That's usually what I want, I don't want it to be like hanging on some wall where you can't ??? into it or the alarm will go off or something dumb like that.

Michael Erlewine: Right, that's because they give them out, but even then, they only give them out...they don't do much with them.

Frank Wiedemann: No, they don't.

Michael Erlewine: Like they used to...I mean, when I was...in the day of course they were all over the street.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, see that's cool [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, no, very cool.

Frank Wiedemann: Or just like being...you know some people I would love to do a poster and just see it, you know, reproduce it 40 times on a construction site wall and would have it be all torn up and other posters being stuck on top of it and stuff and enter into??? part of the public landscape I guess and I've been doing, like there's an Aimee Mann??? poster that I did and then there's a Fischerspooner that I just did and...

Michael Erlewine: Oh there are new ones?

Frank Wiedemann: Aimee Mann is old, that's a new old archive, Fischerspooner's new and then another one is Robert Randolph and those are all sort of what I consider kind of pop-culture posters because Aimee Mann is just a giant red-vine package...??? Called cigarettes and red-vine. So it's like graphic design of graphic design...the Fischerspooner is a package of action figures and I actually bought some action figures and dressed it up as the van and then it's a whole package and around it, I made it look like there...the whole poster looks like the front of the packaging of action figures and Robert Randolph is a poster of a poster, it's like a Robert Randolph...

Michael Erlewine: And these are all in the BG series...or not?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, they're on my site, well you should have the Aimee Mann one, and then the other one...

Michael Erlewine: You don't know what date it was or anything, I'm trying to...

Frank Wiedemann: It was like two years or something like that. I mean it's really simple, it's just when you look at it just look's like a box of red vine. But instead of it saying red vine it's saying, type is saying??? Aimee Mann and then on my site if you click to it, I think the pop row now, is the Fischerspooner and the Robert Randolph.

Michael Erlewine: Let me see if I can get to your site. I mean I have them all here but I have to search for them.

Frank Wiedemann: It's on all my e-mails at the very bottom.

Michael Erlewine: Okay, ??? do that. What do you think of the Charlatans U.K. one you did, how was that...?

Frank Wiedemann: I really like it, but...

Michael Erlewine: I think it's great.

Frank Wiedemann: You do?

Michael Erlewine: It's totally different, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah. It wasn't received too well there, but....

Michael Erlewine: Oh what was the problem, just...

Frank Wiedemann: I don't know...

Michael Erlewine: I mean Arlene or who...?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, she's like...

Michael Erlewine: And this is all off the record, just so you know, you don't have to be...

Frank Wiedemann: I don't know it was like someone's drinking??? her better and she pretty much doesn't know why or not.

Michael Erlewine: But she's done some herself.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, a lot.

Michael Erlewine: As far as I can tell because I have a set that was very hard, her name appears more than any other artist in the database because she's supervised so many things. It's not totally clear what she does...what does she do?

Frank Wiedemann: Ah well she steers us in the right direction, a lot of times we'll go off the handle or do something this way, something that way and it definitely she saves a lot of posters that I've done.

Michael Erlewine: So she actually does something useful.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, no...she will, first of all she's just the artist that she finds stuff to work on the poster and then there have been times where I'll, you know, I'll be so...I'll be working on it so hard I can't get far enough away from it and then she'll say, oh what are you doing and pull this back in, pull that back kind of...you know, and then it actually kind of gets us back on track.

Michael Erlewine: Oh I see the Fischerspooner now, it's a trip.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: [laughs].

Frank Wiedemann: Well it's actually, that was the only poster that actually the band made an effort to get me back stage...

Michael Erlewine: They liked it?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, they loved it because their show...their more of a performance art people???...

Michael Erlewine: Well that's what it looks like, I don't know them...

Frank Wiedemann: Well they're backed by a big gallery in New York, Deitsh, Deutch, or something like that and their whole idea is about the what they call hyper-mediocrity and disposability of pop-music today.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: So...

Michael Erlewine: Yeah it looks like performance art or something.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I mean they...some people like their record, you know it's sort of retro-80's kind of Pet Shop Boy's kind of stuff. But everything was lip synced, but they did it as a joke, I mean the guy was smoking while he was supposed to be singing, the whole...you know, it was just the whole statement on just like the classic...

Michael Erlewine: What about the Robert Randolph piece, now that's kind of classic, you know, almost looks like it could have been a Tuten piece or something.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, well that was a few days???...a lot of times I get called because I can do things really fast.

Michael Erlewine: I think it's pretty, I mean I...of course I'm...you know like all music, all...I'm all posters, right? I'm always trying to find the best stuff and that Coldplay thing is kind of cool

Frank Wiedemann: I love that one, yeah, that was another...that was actually, it's not perfect, but it was another two day one.

Michael Erlewine: That's one of your better ones, I'd never seen that one before, I don't have any...I may have missed it the whole...

Frank Wiedemann: No, that's...that one's not even out yet, the shows on Friday.

Michael Erlewine: Oh okay. That's very cool.

Frank Wiedemann: Thanks. One of my favorites ones is actually the Red Jack Johnson poster which...

Michael Erlewine: Oh I've got that.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, because I think it describes him really well, because that...

Michael Erlewine: That was a hard one to get.

Frank Wiedemann: Was it? Yeah, that...

Michael Erlewine: Man I paid through the nose for that...probably could have got one from you...

Frank Wiedemann: How much [laughs], I'm just curious how much was...?

Michael Erlewine: Hundreds of dollars.

Frank Wiedemann: Wow.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, do you have any, it's oversized right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, that's one of the big ones.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, no I had...it was really hard to find...yeah, it's...

Frank Wiedemann: I love that one just because of the feel of it and just knowing what I know about Jack Johnson and I'm not a huge fan of his music but it's sort of David Matthewish, but much more personal and actually real and he apparently is a very, very nice person, he helped clean up after the show backstage and...

Michael Erlewine: Oh that's cool.

Frank Wiedemann: You know, so like that small little island and then it's him and next to it is like the mainland which...

Michael Erlewine: Now which Jack Johnson you talking about the red one, or the wave one?

Frank Wiedemann: The red one.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah okay.

Frank Wiedemann: The wave one was the fiasco.

Michael Erlewine: I wouldn't say, it's just different, I'm glad to see it, you know the first one.

Frank Wiedemann: No, it literally was a fiasco it didn't work out with any...we tried to get a painting and we weren't able to get the right...the painting and the guy cut...dragging us along until finally he said no I don't want to sell, so then I had basically...

Michael Erlewine: Had to do it yourself?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, so I just found some low res image on the Internet and blew it up and it's really horrible quality and had to be done in like a day or less.

Michael Erlewine: Don't be so hard on yourself, of course, you artists that's what you do, you know it's actually interesting, it's kind of a pleasant different thing.

Frank Wiedemann: True.

Michael Erlewine: That's the way it looks to me and I've...you know, and I like my old Cheap Trick one that you did as simple as that is, that's one of my favorites.

Frank Wiedemann: That one's like the...like the...that one my school would be happy with [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: That's right, well that maybe the most...yeah...approachable one.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well you've done so many, you've been fortunate that BGP and those guys work you so much, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, yeah. No, I love doing them and I love like...you know...applying, some are painted, some of photographed, some are kind of more graphic design and I like doing...that's what I like about graphic art, for me personally not everything has to be done exactly the same way, it's just a collage of different styles and parts put together to make a message or an announcement for something.

Michael Erlewine: You've done a bunch of gay book covers, those are totally different.

Frank Wiedemann: Those are just...I did the photographs for and then I Scott Idleman did the...Scott Idleman does some posters for BGP too...

Michael Erlewine: So you did the layout of it? You shot the photographs.

Frank Wiedemann: Just the photographs. The only book cover that I did the design for was women who run with werewolves which is also something...

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, it's there. Yeah, that's interesting, but that's kind of...for you that's...I wouldn't have, if someone showed me I never would have thought that was yours.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: Of course I wouldn't have thought the covers because you're BGP stuff is very conservative, right?

Frank Wiedemann: You think so?

Michael Erlewine: Oh. Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah. I mean that's not a put-down.

Frank Wiedemann: No, no, no, no. I just...

Michael Erlewine: No, no, you're very...you come from a Risky background, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: That says it, I mean a friend went to Risdy, you probably don't know him he's in San Francisco, he's younger, his name is Julian Kat.

Frank Wiedemann: Julian Kat?

Michael Erlewine: Kat, I mean he's got a nice job being a commercial artist right in San Francisco, he's good...how old are you roughly?

Frank Wiedemann: 38.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, he must be more like 30.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I graduated in 1987.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, he went to Risdy and see he couldn't draw worth beans when he went, he came out he was art.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: So it must be a great school.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, it's...I loved it, it was tough, but I loved it.

Michael Erlewine: Are you in touch with David Fisher at all? I mean David Singer?

Frank Wiedemann: I don't...

Michael Erlewine: You have...you have little collagy like stuff, right? But he just lives not...you know, if you've never met him you should, I mean he's a wonderful bee????....

Frank Wiedemann: Oh really?

Michael Erlewine: Wonderful mind and he's so very, very awake, he did all the collage in the early BG's, right. The montage really, is correct. Are you familiar with them?

Frank Wiedemann: I'll have to look at my book.

Michael Erlewine: Okay [laughs].

Frank Wiedemann: I've got the Filmore book.

Michael Erlewine: But you do a lot of stuff like that...

Frank Wiedemann: Which one...I...?

Michael Erlewine: Well...well, Luna...

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah. I mean that's a collagy like thing.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, definitely, oh it's Sal, I'm sorry can you hold on one second?

Michael Erlewine: Sure.

Frank Wiedemann: Hello?

Michael Erlewine: Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: It's okay...I can always call you back you too.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh no, no, no, that's fine. Oh yeah, so I the Luna, yeah...

Michael Erlewine: I think the Cold Play is one of my favorite ones, of course I've just seen it, right? I mean these others seen them so many times, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: But this I've never seen before, but I must say it really has an impact.

Frank Wiedemann: Wow, thank you very much.

Michael Erlewine: Did they like it down there?

Frank Wiedemann: It was...like I say it was done in two days...

Michael Erlewine: That doesn't matter.

Frank Wiedemann: I know, but they were expecting more, usually for one of the oversized posters I get a month.

Michael Erlewine: Oh it's oversized which means I'll have to die to get it.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: They don't give you some, you don't sell them, do you?

Frank Wiedemann: What?

Michael Erlewine: You don't have any sell?

Frank Wiedemann: No, I haven't gotten any.

Michael Erlewine: They don't give you...they don't give you some...?

Frank Wiedemann: They're holding off, but I have gotten any of the Coldplay ones.

Michael Erlewine: But when you do have them, do you ever sell them?

Frank Wiedemann: Ah no, that's my retirement [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Oh really? You're going to hang on to them?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah. I could send you one.

Michael Erlewine: Well, I mean I'd be glad to buy one if I can't find it...I had so much trouble getting the Jack Johnson, I get mine from a guy named Ben Komins. Do you know Ben?

Frank Wiedemann: Uh uh.

Michael Erlewine: Well he's hooked it, he's gets them, but sometimes he can't get oversized ones and then I go...then there's some E-Bay person that scrounges them up but I hate to do that.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, all the posters are given out at the shows except for the oversized ones.

Michael Erlewine: Right, oh that's why.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, they're given to the crew, the band, the people that work the show and me.

Michael Erlewine: Save me one of those.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: If I can't find one I'll pay you fair market value, whatever it is for it.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: Just because I think I'd like to have it, also I'll do whatever I can for you just on the site, I think that.... I'm overwhelmed at this point, but I won't be and then I want to feature different people and I really want people to look at different art, right? And then to buy it and to invest in it and put it on their wall and all that kind of stuff.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah. No, that's...something that I definitely want to be a part of that.

Michael Erlewine: And I love the Blondie piece you did with the lipstick too.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh [laughs] that was another...that was a one and a half day one.

Michael Erlewine: I don't care.

Frank Wiedemann: No, I love that one and the band loved it too. I got a call...I was actually working, I think on Bureau Seven and we finished that and Arlene was saying wow it's so easy to work with you, we're having real big trouble with the Blondie poster and it's due, you know day after tomorrow. And then I say, well here I have a picture for you maybe you can do, so I sent her sent that picture of the lipstick and slapped like some type that looked like maybe a Vogue magazine cover on it and she's like, "Oh, yeah, go with that."

Michael Erlewine: That's cool. But then the Belle and Sebastian piece is like very conservative, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah that's one...

Michael Erlewine: Very soft and muted.

Frank Wiedemann: That one's weird [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: It's different.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah. It doesn't quite cut it and they're a really great straight band, I should have done better because they don't occur very often and I really like...I think they're a great...their music is probably nothing ??? stuff all the time.

Michael Erlewine: Right. And you're not in touch with the artists that just live around there? I mean are you in San Francisco?

Frank Wiedemann: I'm in Berkeley now.

Michael Erlewine: Oh, where in Berkeley roughly?

Frank Wiedemann: San Pablo...

Michael Erlewine: Oh downtown...

Frank Wiedemann: Well no, San Pablo and Peter.

Michael Erlewine: Oh okay, so...yeah, I used to...I've spent a bunch of time there.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, it's right near Billner??? Street.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, nice place.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I mean you've got Eric King lives right there, he's a...one of the big experts on posters, right? Paul Getchell lives there, another expert, Walter Medeiros lives there...what about the artists? You don't meet them?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah [laughs] I don't get out much.

Michael Erlewine: Oh you don't, it doesn't matter.

Frank Wiedemann: You know it's like I would like to, but I mean, I used to get out, like when I lived on Haight Street and...worked on Haight Street and then lived right near by there I...

Michael Erlewine: But don't you remember you told me that when you worked there that was good for you, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. That's what I.... it was all terribly??? bad physically, you know? It was just constant, you know going out with people, staying up all night and all that stuff.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: And you know, because I didn't want....

Michael Erlewine: Well David Singer lives in Petaluma??? which is north of you, ???rich, he's very approachable, but he also has a lot of sensibility and sensitivities that you have that you would like him, he's a lot older, but he's still doing just incredible collage. I mean no one's ever seen them, but he's got boxes full of collages that are worth looking at, worth looking at meaning, wow.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Why would someone do this and go to this trouble and he hasn't finished them because he keeps rearranging them, right? For twenty years, but it's worth the trip, aside from he's like a really first-rate mind. And he's still very active, right? He's not trying to do the stuff that made him famous, right? He's doing whatever he wants. Anyways, it would be cool.

Frank Wiedemann: No, I mean I'm definitely always interested in meeting other artists, I mean especially like inspire me, because I want to get more into just doing art again, like I used to do when I was a kid, just whether it is painting or whether it's collage or...I don't want to only sit in front of the computer.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah [laughs].

Frank Wiedemann: Do posters, I want to start doing...

Michael Erlewine: Well do you ever drive across the bridge up that way?

Frank Wiedemann: I don't have a car even [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Oh, okay, well sometime, you think about it, if somebody wants to go up there, I'll hook you up, you guys go out and have lunch and then you go and look at his collages because I promise you...and he's very gentle???, he's the neatest person I've ever met, place is like you could eat on his floor.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: But he's...it's really worthwhile, is all I can say, I mean it was worthwhile to me and I didn't know that anyone ever did this with collages and I've seen a lot of collages, but nothing like this.

Frank Wiedemann: Wow.

Michael Erlewine: And he has one he did of just Gauguin's stuff, it's just awesome it ought to be like a...it's like a book, you wouldn't have to teach a Gauguin course you'd just have to give somebody a copy of this collage and everything is there and it's beautifully put together, right?

As beautifully as Gauguin could have put it together. It's neat, I mean it's just totally different, right? So anyway...

Frank Wiedemann: No, I love collage I've been like trying to like find old magazines at thrift stores, but all thrift stores but all thrift stores are so hoihty toity now they don't have magazines.

Michael Erlewine: Well he's got boxes and boxes of them I'm sure he could tell you all of his tricks about where you can get stuff that is safe to play with.

Frank Wiedemann: Right, oh yeah, I see what you're saying.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well it is, it's dangerous.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: In fact we just did one together, if you...you may have seen it on our site. Called America Be Vigilant. Oh take a look at Classicposters.com it's a collage that David did, it's not a gigposter, if you have the computer are you there now?

Frank Wiedemann: Ah no, my ??? hooked back there.

Michael Erlewine: Okay, that's cool, so anyway, I think we're drifting but...

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: It's fun to talk to you.

Frank Wiedemann: No, it's great, yeah, it's good to you know see that there's...because on the Internet I'm very wary of anybody contacting me off the Internet and so just to be in another element is really nice???

Michael Erlewine: Well, the Internet contact, I think I told you, we provide will be anonymous.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: If someone wants to contact you they fill out a little thing and it comes to you, it will say from Classicposters, so that you know that we're doing the good and then you decide to respond or not, but it might be commission, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right, right. Again, and for me I'm not a 100% interested in selling posters, more to get my work out there and maybe get more work like this, I mean I'd like to eventually be able to do only CD covers, posters, that kind of stuff that I really enjoy and completely let all of the corporate stuff go.

Michael Erlewine: Just off the record what does one charge for a CD cover? I have no idea.

Frank Wiedemann: I'm doing one for free right now [laughs]...

Michael Erlewine: Well I guess that's...yeah, then that's easy.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, but they're...

Michael Erlewine: Is there is going rate?

Frank Wiedemann: I haven't...

Michael Erlewine: Oh, you haven't done a bunch of them, or you have?

Frank Wiedemann: No, I have done like...they're mostly for Indie bands it's like their first CD...it's like \$300, \$500, but in the graphic design whatever rates book, I think it's

something like \$4500-\$5000 and I know...oh my god, what's name...a friend of mine is really good friends with a guy who a does a lot of posters and he just did the cover for the new...anyway he got \$60,000 for it.

Michael Erlewine: Wow.

Frank Wiedemann: But, you know that's like...it was like a huge...can't remember the name...

Michael Erlewine: It must be a big band.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, no...it was really big, but it wasn't like one of my favorites so I can't...

Michael Erlewine: But is he is a known artist?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I'm not sure he has...he doesn't...he does pen and ink drawings that are really detailed...

Michael Erlewine: But he's not a poster...he's not a gigposter artist?

Frank Wiedemann: No, I think he's done gigposters too.

Michael Erlewine: Anyone I know?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I sure you would. I don't know, like when I went over to there house once he was doing for a poster for Planet of the Apes and making..???

Michael Erlewine: [laughs] I'll pass on that one.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs] But...anyway, so, like the cover I'm doing right now for these guys in Norway, they're some...I guess they're pretty big over there, or Denmark, I can't remember they're called Fairy Tale Abuse and they're

putting together a CD and that's pretty...they're like...they're gold they want to do it???

Michael Erlewine: That's cool.

Frank Wiedemann: You know it's fun for me, I guess to do something totally crazy, and you know, it's fun.

Michael Erlewine: No, I think it's great and you should do stuff like that, right? My whole life is been that...???

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, as long as I can pay the bills, I don't care.

Michael Erlewine: And how does that work out, are you able to...you know, you have a family or...?

Frank Wiedemann: No, no, no...I live on my own.

Michael Erlewine: Oh that's probably better.

Frank Wiedemann: Through the posters, I would not survive, at all, but the corporate stuff, that's like the...that's my income and then the poster stuff is more for scope ability??? [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: And you have like an agent or how do you....? Someone's bring you work is what I'm saying...

Frank Wiedemann: I just do it myself and it's word of mouth, all the people I work with tell other people at other companies, that's just how it works. I don't have an agent or anything...I mean the corporate stuff I do really....yeah...things like junk mail???[laughs]. You know I...and then I do, every now and then I do get to do something kind of cool looking that's more sort of what I learned at school for the corporate...but that's just stuff I do for money.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, well I'm...as I say, I like that Coldplay one, I think that's really...

Frank Wiedemann: Oh thanks.

Michael Erlewine: I like some of the other ones too, but I'm...I like that one I don't know why, I mean, other than it affects you...

Frank Wiedemann: It's really an elegant...that one...

Michael Erlewine: It is elegant.

Frank Wiedemann: Color's, the color's in there...

Michael Erlewine: I mean I love the Blondie one but I could never put in on the wall or anything, I'm too conservative...

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, well...the opening band's name is ???...even cause problems with Kurt???

Michael Erlewine: Oh really?

Frank Wiedemann: He couldn't even say it...he just, oh and thank you so much for the opening I can't even say the name.

Michael Erlewine: [laughs]. Oh, she couldn't even say the name.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, she said...

Michael Erlewine: That's bad. But Coldplay I could show my grandma, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, that one...

Michael Erlewine: And keep it on her wall...anyway, that's neat.

Frank Wiedemann: Cool.

Michael Erlewine: Well good, I think I have some idea from just talking to you.... I don't think I've met anyone just like you.

Frank Wiedemann: Uh oh.

Michael Erlewine: Most other guys are much more in the trenches, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Oh right.

Michael Erlewine: You've had some good fortune I hope and it seems like it.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah...well, yeah, I'm wondering if like the German, I grew up in Germany until I was seven and had like really German sort of practical parents, it's like you know rather than being a totally...like a dreamer and being only a poster artist and struggling and stuff I know that I have to do stuff to provide so that I can have all the stuff that I need to do the posters???.

Michael Erlewine: But you're not German...you don't have any accent.

Frank Wiedemann: No, I'm still a citizen [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Oh you are really?

Frank Wiedemann: Green card, yeah. Well I was seven when I came here.

Michael Erlewine: Oh I see.

Frank Wiedemann: They just dropped me off at school??? [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Cool. You have any questions for me, I think I've probably said too much anyway.

Frank Wiedemann: No, I just...I don't have any questions, but the final bio you'll run by me I guessing?

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, what we'll probably be doing at this point is we'll transcribe this and then little excerpts out of it, a lot because we can't show it, some of it's secret stuff. I'll send you the transcript to look at and to review.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: And then you say, gee I don't want this in, or you didn't spell this name right, because I didn't hear it right or something and then we'll have an interview. A full bio is not going to happen immediately just because there's too many people like you that I need to do bios, and I've got to do bios of the really old timers first.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Because.... just because, that's the way.... just because, that's they way they should.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: What I will do is have this interview and I'll have the little thing you sent I'll...I've already edited that down, just so that people can have some basic information. I think it's fun and I'd like to revisit this with you again I've enjoyed talking to me.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh me too, I definitely enjoyed talking to you to.

Michael Erlewine: I'm going to go right out and see if I can get that Coldplay, I mean I know it's not there yet but...

Frank Wiedemann: Well, I'll....

Michael Erlewine: You hold on to one, if I can't get one, I like the poster enough I'll pay whatever you want.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Within reason.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: ????. But it sure is nice and also I'll feature it and ultimately it would be neat if you do have them, it's too bad that BGP doesn't enable it's artists to have enough of their own work so they could sell it, even if they wanted to.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: I mean you don't get enough of it.

Frank Wiedemann: Well we get some, but for me personally I don't want to sell it, because I don't want, I don't know how much, I mean for one of the big ones apparently it would be worth it, but the small ones they sell them all over the place in the city and in Berkeley and the neighbor records and stuff and they're like \$20 a piece.

Michael Erlewine: Oh is that right, see I have no idea what they do out there.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, because all the people here they pick them up at the show and then they sell them to Amoeba??? for \$7...

Michael Erlewine: Oh I see.

Frank Wiedemann: --- for the small posters and then...I've checked them on E-Bay on stuff and --- they're never more than like \$25 or \$35 or something, seems like a hassle --- running around --- posters and...

Michael Erlewine: No, I hear.... yeah, I didn't know what they do out there, I mean I get them from a guy that is connected, I pay probably \$25 or \$30 for the regular one.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: And whatever, the big ones vary, depends on...there are a couple of them that are really hard to get, I don't have totally all of them, I think I have almost all of them, but Bill Graham also does the special events and some of those are really difficult.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, like the Cheap Trick and then I did...

Michael Erlewine: Right.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah...so that one I even fought Amoeba??? for like \$80.

Michael Erlewine: Oh really? [laughs]

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Oh.

Frank Wiedemann: So that was like years and years ago...so I made different people ???.

Michael Erlewine: But it would be nice, you know I think it's nice to have things available, but...when it's archived, whatever that guy decides to do with it, there may be lots of available. It's not like Bill Graham doesn't have them, right? They've got pallets of them because I've seen them.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, I don't know if still have them or he has them all.

Michael Erlewine: No he has them all, but I saying they.... I went and visited and got a tour, I'm sure you have to, you know forklift land.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Enormous quantities of...they've...I think they have lots of them, right? So something's going to happen to them, but not rare and maybe the oversize ones maybe, I don't know how many they print of them.

Frank Wiedemann: They print a lot less of those.

Michael Erlewine: Yeah.

Frank Wiedemann: I always ask for ??? as I possible can, I got one for Coldplay but I guess the printer...???

Michael Erlewine: Well you have a good Internet connection?

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah.

Michael Erlewine: Okay, so you can take something that's maybe half a megabyte.

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I'll send you a sample of one of the Texas's pieces of art, now it's not like your art, it's nothing that's going to.... it's something totally different, I just think it shows a lot of work, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right. I mean, I don't...stipple, I used to do stipple in high school all the time and I want to get back into that for my stuff I mean I love all kinds of art...

Michael Erlewine: This is like stipple gone to heaven, though, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah.

Michael Erlewine: This is incredibly good stuff...well, some of this, some of this talk about if fallacious???? stuff, there's no place...Texas has done the most absolutely wild graphics, way more than...it makes San Francisco look very, very conservative maybe I'll send you a couple of those if you could stand them, but they're really...I think they're great, I show them to everyone of course, right? Because I think they're incredible that someone had the guts to do that.

Frank Wiedemann: Well that's what art is all about.

Michael Erlewine: I know it. Okay, I'll send you a couple of those too. They're funny and their amazing...no, and it's all him, they're not serious, the Texas guys...for some reason they have faces in the sky, it must be because it's a big sky out there.

Frank Wiedemann: [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: But there's all this faces in the sky and all this Texas stuff and cowboys and...anyway, I'll send you some and you can let me know what you think of it.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: And I'll let you be but probably sometime I'll call you and talk to you again.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: When I'm a little more...probably have some more questions.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay, that'd be fine. The only thing that I would ask about any of, you know I'm sure you could be checking on some other stuff from people is not to mention any names from BGP or...

Michael Erlewine: No, no, no...first of all you'll see it.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay.

Michael Erlewine: And I think I'll even take that stuff out before you see it.

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, just because I mean I didn't...

Michael Erlewine: No, no...

Frank Wiedemann: It was nothing bad, but I just never know whose going to get...you know?

Michael Erlewine: I'm not into...what would it be...exposure, right? Expose, this is not. What I want is everyone...my motto is like, "A rising tide raises all boats." I want to everyone to grow and prosper from this whole thing.

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: Each...and allmusic guide says and I always treated every artist equally whether they had no following or a big following, right?

Frank Wiedemann: Right.

Michael Erlewine: And I feel the same way with posters, I mean you are actually a pretty big name in posters of modern. But I treat all the little ones the same.

Frank Wiedemann: It is so weird to me because I don't get out [laughs].

Michael Erlewine: Yeah you don't get away...you should get out more [laughs], right? Well anyway. When I'm the same way, like I have a family and my family cannot get me out, I mean the worst part of the year is when they have vacation, right? Finally we agreed that I don't have to go because I ruin it, because I'm happy...

Frank Wiedemann: Yeah, well I'm just trying to work a lot until I can save up enough money to move to like to like Hanaing??? Maui....

Michael Erlewine: Yeah, hopefully you go out and walk stuff, you got to get that...

Frank Wiedemann: Oh yeah, yeah.

Michael Erlewine: I do that.

Frank Wiedemann: I'm just not a big ????

Michael Erlewine: You don't have a dog or anything?

Frank Wiedemann: No, and I do a lot of walking. I get out, I do, but I'm just not a big personal schmoozer.

Michael Erlewine: Me neither.

Frank Wiedemann: So that kind of stuff, so that's why I'm...

Michael Erlewine: No, I'm an anal-retentive...that's what they say...I mean I just...I'm in mass of incredible detailed stuff, right? And have for years, and I like to do it.

Frank Wiedemann: That's good.

Michael Erlewine: Cool, okay it's nice to meet you.

Frank Wiedemann: Nice meeting you too.

Michael Erlewine: Talk to you in the future.

Frank Wiedemann: Okay thank you.

Michael Erlewine: Okay, yeah, bye.