

RIP Arthur

Remembering Arthur Weinstein, one of the architects of the modern nightclub.

Arthur Weinstein succumbed to cancer on July 9 at the age of 60. But the night-life warrior's legacy - one of atmospheric light, passion before profit, and tough-love mentorship - lives on. Weinstein owned and operated a series of New York clubs - some legal, some not - in the '70s and '80s, including Hurrah, the Continental, the Jefferson and the World. In later

years, he turned his attention to more aesthetic pursuits, serving as lighting director at Club USA, Tunnel and Lime-light. He took up photography, and silk screening: Some of his large screens, of cultural icons like Roy Cohn and George Gershwin, still hang in his beloved Chelsea Hotel, where he lived.

While the Web is rife with memorials for Arthur from friends all over the globe, we asked some of his closest to remember the man in print. Steve Lieberman of SJ Lighting worked with him on lighting projects in New York; Steve Lewis of SL Design, and writer of blog Goodnight Mr. Lewis, worked for him in the early years.

"A Voracious Appetite For Art"

Arthur was a truly amazing person; one of the most creative minds I've known in my lifetime, and a pioneer in the nightclub industry. The man has been involved in nightclubs since the beginning. He's owned them, designed

them, and has been a friend to the people that make this industry great. That was one of the reasons I always felt close to him.

There was never any pretense when it came to Arthur. He was one of the few people that I always felt I could trust

When I would go out with Arthur at night, we could walk up to any club in town, and it was like the mayor of the city just walked up to the ropes. Everyone from the security guys, to the door hosts, owners, DJs, techs, and

busboys, all knew him and welcomed him inside. This was not about being cool, it was simply about being respected. The respect they showed this great man was reciprocal. That was part of the amazing experience of being his friend.

I've had the pleasure of working with Arthur on several jobs over the years. Every time I learned something from the man. Whether it was lighting design, club design, or politics on how to deal with a club owner, Arthur's opinion, insight and point of view



"The Wisest Of The Wise Guys"

Known to everyone with clout in the nightclub industry, Art was a familiar face for a few decades. He owned and operated some of the best clubs in history. The World, Hurrah, The Continental, and The Jefferson provided thousands of extraordinary nights for thousands of hipsters long before the word was unfortunately popularized. Everybody loved and respected him, even those who were over him.

Arthur's world was light and magic, and imparting wisdom on those of us who had less than he, and that just about covers everyone. Arthur's eyes saw through the hype and saw the souls of those around him.

Once, when at the door of one of his clubs, I was hustling the celebrity du jour inside, when Arthur chided me: "Why do you give a f*ck about him? Get these kids in!" It was a posse of skaters, and then he went inside to share some Stoli with them. Art never gave a damn about the hype. You were either cool or you weren't, and no amount of tabloid success made you cool, but a hat tilted at the right angle made you a pal.

I don't know how to continue without Art. He was my biggest critic, yet my biggest supporter. Sometimes the press, the public, and everyone around me would be all up my ass congratulating me on some job well done, and Art would point out my flaws and show me a better way. Sometimes I'd be down on myself, designer-blocked, and he'd tell me, "You were on to something. It was really good," and I'd pull it off. He was the wisest of the wise guys, and those who met him always knew they had met someone.

Once, when I was working for him it was raining really hard, and the crowd was small, and he walked in and I made a rain excuse about the numbers. "Shud up!" he said. "Never blame the rain," and looked around the room. "What a great crowd. Everybody's having fun. Get in there with a smile on that puss of yours." And so I did, and it was great, and I had learned one lesson of a thousand lessons. With his death Arthur has given me new life and commitment to try to live up to the standards he set for me. That he considered me his friend is the greatest validation I've ever had. - *Steve Lewis, reprinted with permission from www.goodnightmrlewis.com.*



were always made clear. There was never any pretense when it came to Arthur. He was one of the few people that I always felt I could trust and confide in, no matter what the situation. The man lived life the way he wanted, long before he was sick. He was an artist in every sense of the word. He had a voracious appetite for art and literature and the nuances that accompany those ideals. This was apparent in his life and his work.

Arthur was the one constant for me whenever I was in New York. No matter what, he was always one of my first calls when I would arrive in town. "Hey kid, you in the city?" I will miss our visits as I see the New York skyline come into view from wherever my travels are taking me. I will miss walking down 23rd Street to the Chelsea Hotel to see my old friend. I will miss sitting in his art studio talking with him, looking at pictures, or at a new piece he is working on.

I loved the man wholeheartedly; his friendship was priceless to me. From the moment that phone rang and I knew he was gone I felt that loss on many levels. I felt the loss of a friend, a mentor and an industry legend.

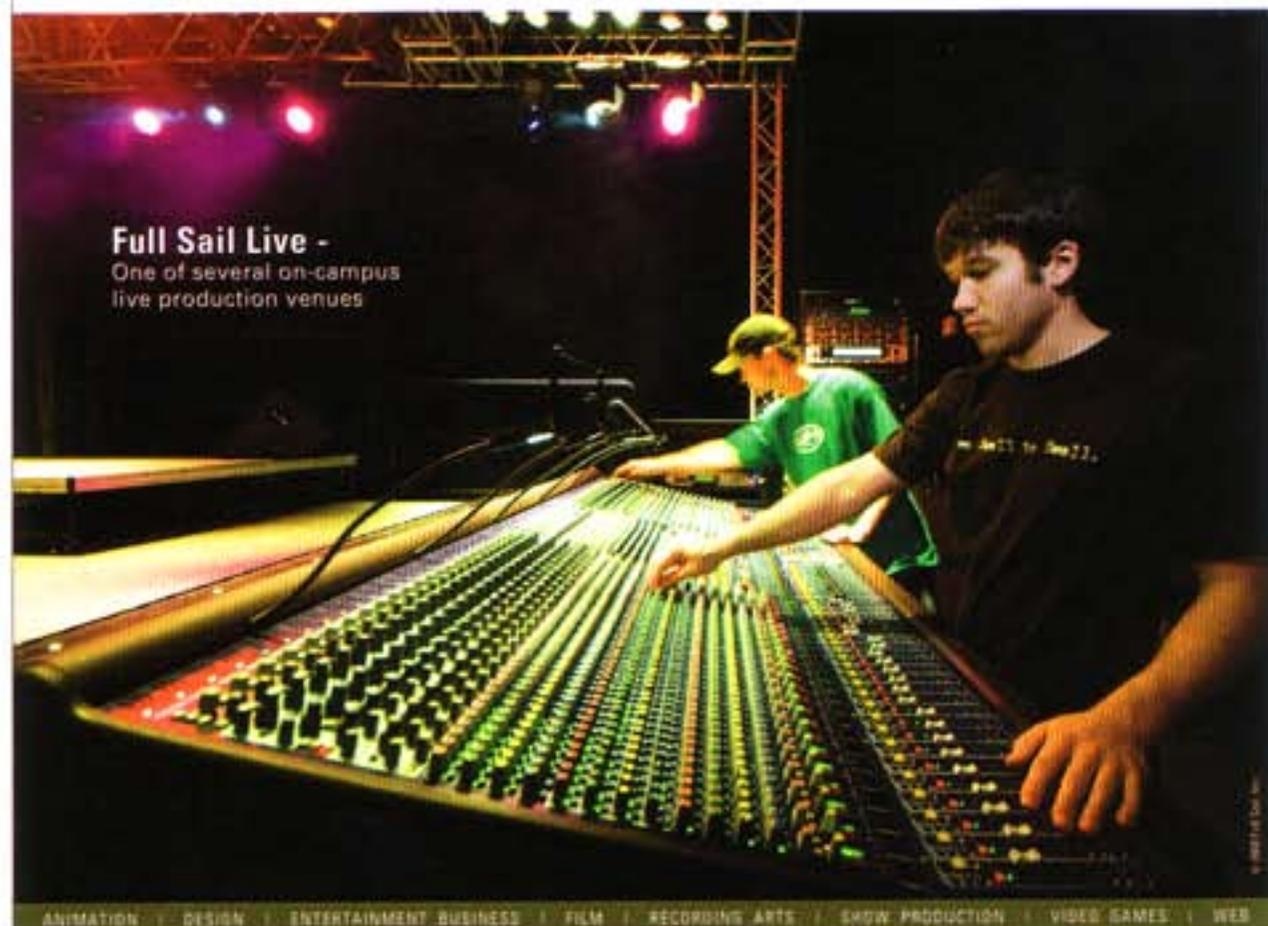
-*Steve Lieberman*

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Arthur Weinstein

Just recently I received a call from an old friend with some very sad news. Arthur Weinstein had lost his fight with cancer and had passed away. It's been a long time since I've cried for anyone or anything, but that day I sat on the bed in my hotel and I wept. It's amazing the memories that rush into your mind at the moment when you realize that someone or something you hold dear is lost.

Arthur was a truly amazing person; one of the most creative minds I've known in my lifetime. A pioneer in the nightclub industry, from Studio 54 to The World, Tunnel, Limelight, Palladium, Club USA and so many more. The man has been involved in nightclubs since the beginning. He's owned them, designed them and has been a friend to the people that make this industry great. That was one of the reasons I always felt close to him. When I would go out with Arthur at night, we could walk up to any club in town and it was like the mayor of the city just walked up to the ropes. Everyone from the security guys, to the door hosts, club owners, dj's, techs, and bus-boys, all knew him and welcomed him inside. This was not about being cool, it was simply about being respected. The respect they showed this great man was reciprocal. That was part of the amazing experience of being his friend.

I've had the pleasure of working with Arthur on several jobs over the years. Every time I learned something from the man. Whether it was lighting design, club design, or politics on how to deal with a club owner, Arthur's opinion, insight and general point of view were always made clear. There was never any pretense when it came to Arthur. He was one of the few people that I always felt I could trust and confide in, no matter what the situation. I loved the man whole heartedly; his friendship was priceless to me. From the moment that phone rang and I knew he was gone I felt that loss on many levels. I felt the loss of losing a friend, I felt the loss of losing a mentor and I felt the loss of losing an industry legend.

The man lived life the way he wanted, long before he was sick. He was an artist in every sense of the word. He had a voracious appetite for art and literature and the nuances that accompany those ideals. This was apparent in his life and his work.

From my days living in New York through all of my moves, Arthur has always been like family to me. A mentor, a father, a husband, a son, a brother, a colleague, a friend, an inspiration; these are just a few words I could use to describe Arthur. I am certain to all of the people that were a part of Arthur's life, he was all of those things and more.

Arthur was the one constant for me whenever I was in New York. No matter what, he was always one of my first calls when I would arrive in town. "Hey Kid, you in the city?" I will miss our visits as I see the New York skyline come into view from wherever my travels are taking me. I will miss walking down 23rd street to the Chelsea hotel to see my old friend. I will miss sitting in his art studio talking with him, looking at pictures, looking at a new piece he is working on. As I write this eulogy it is still hard for me to imagine not seeing Arthur again. My sympathies are with his family and his loved ones.

I will miss my friend. Goodbye Arthur.