

CUT-OUTS

When the Mafia ran the black music business

Based on the incredible true story

A dramatic series by

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The Show

In the formative days of radio, when African-American music was called race music, it was ignored by the major record labels, making it especially vulnerable to exploitation. From the booking and talent agencies to the labels themselves, the silent partners and real bosses were often Mafia figures. Set in the black music world of the late 1970s and early 1980s, *Cut-outs* will focus on the relationship between Sol Levine, a tough Jew from the Bronx, and Tootie Scott, a black gangster who served in the Korean war. Sol, who has spent the last thirty years turning his independent label, BLACKJACK RECORDS, into a powerhouse by striking a devil's deal with the Genovese crime family, relies on Tootie to recruit emerging black musical talent for him. Tootie, an operator in the Harlem numbers racket, also functions as Sol's friend, enforcer and sometimes partner.

Now, in the pivotal year of 1979, with disco at its height and the country suffering a national malaise expressed through the Iran hostage crisis, Sol's empire is under threat: His masters in the mob are squeezing him for more money. The brand new Walkman will soon erode his hold on jukeboxes and radio, and Tootie is questioning their relationship just as he needs him most, with an insurrection spreading in the ranks as clients complain about Sol's habit of putting his name on songs he didn't write. Blackjack must also keep up with Japanese buyouts of the major labels and evolving musical styles, as disco, which only recently overshadowed R & B, is about to be replaced by hip hop. And behind it all, the F.B.I. is slowly closing in on Sol's arrangements with Italian organized crime, just as he unwittingly goes into business with Jamaican drug dealers, requiring Tootie to exploit his Caribbean roots and New York moxie to navigate between two mafias.

Welcome to *Cut-outs*, an exploration of business mores and race relations at the dawn of the Reagan era, accompanied by a timeless, unparalleled soundtrack. With its large supporting cast of songwriters, artists, music executives, boxers, mobsters, DJs, G-men and nightclub celebrities, *Cut-outs* is far more than a thriller set in the glamorously gritty world of New York's music scene. It is a history capturing moment, when the entertainment industry - and the country itself - went corporate and when old-school thugs like Sol and Tootie became dinosaurs.

To hear more and to view the full presentation and completed pilot script, please contact
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