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## Дедушки фабричные

Американский музыкант и антрепренер Джими Хендрикса Майк Мэтьюс купил завод в Саратове и чуть было не стал жертвой местной мафии

и начинал бить по нему

ногами. В такие моменты

## Factory Patriarch

## American musician and Jimmy Hendrix' promoter Mike Matthews bought a Saratov factory and almost became a victim of local mafia

"Whenever I was drained of energy I'd play my upright piano while kicking the beat with my foot. At those moments I would forget about the war declared on us by those local criminal structures. I had to stop when I was physically spent and sweat would cover all my body. But as soon as the sweat dried I was fresh and ready to spur on my allies!" American citizen Mike Matthews, who used to work with Jimmy Hendrix, tells us with a contented expression how he prevailed over Saratov criminal groups and corrupted officials.

Eight years ago he bought the Saratov factory ExpoPul. Since then its working team doubled and vacuum tube production tripled. Tubes for guitar amps are being manufactured only in three countries - two thirds of them in Saratov. Worldwide known companies such as Fender, Marshall, Mesa Boogie, Korg, Vox Ltd., Peavey Electronics and others had become Matthews' constant customers. Mike says that nobody had expected the successful factory to become a target of the attack of "black" raiders specializing in property "repartition".

But a year ago the RBE company, who had bought the Reflektor factory, former owner of ExpoPul, cut off the electricity supplying the Matthews' enterprise. "Their methods were far from pleasant: they would open the windows in the next door area when outside it was 20° C below freezing," recalls Vladimir Chinchikov, Director General of the factory and helpmate of Matthews. "We count motes per air liter since we must observe vacuum hygiene. They were breaking the floor, causing dust. They were circular sawing the walls... we had to wear gas-masks! Our computers would not operate properly. We had to go on pickets. Workers had a very loyal attitude. It was a war for survival."

"RBE insisted I sell the factory to them," laughs Mike Matthews. "My answer was simply 'Fuck you!' They picked the wrong enemy. They chose as an enemy the world power of Rock & Roll!"

On top of a medium size factory in Saratov the 65 year old American owns New Sensor Corporation producing Electro-Harmonix sound effects used by Santana and formerly by The Beatles. "Raiders used paid off the mass media to run fabricated stories. They were trying to make me out as an American invader. I call it 'bullshit,' claims Mike. "I wouldn't take it and decided to get out the truth." Fender, Vox UK Ltd., Peavey and Korg, Japan wrote to the Saratov Governor and other high level Russian officials. "What a shame if these high quality Russian products would disappear for an 'entertainment center' planned to be built by RBE company," Fender President, Matthew Janopol wrote in his letter. After this, authorities had to pay attention to the international war of two private companies.

The court ruled in Matthews' favor. The factory received a letter from Volga Region Plenipotentiary of President of Russia. It said that "Government keeps monitoring the situation and ExpoPul would not stop working". As a result RBE fell back and sold its factory properties.

Now Mike Matthews has started a battle with criminal businesses and corruption, all over Russia. His closest plan - holding a Rock Against Corruption festival.

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