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Chris Stein / Negative: Me, Blondie, And The Advent Of Punk



Synopsis

INDIEFAB Book of the Year Awards -- 2014 Finalist

On the occasion of Blondie's fortieth anniversary, Chris Stein shares his iconic and mostly unpublished photographs of Debbie Harry and the cool creatures of the '70s and '80s New York rock scene. While a student at the School of Visual Arts, Chris Stein photographed the downtown New York scene of the early '70s, where he met Deborah Harry and cofounded Blondie. Their blend of punk, dance, and hip-hop spawned a totally new sound, and Stein's photographs helped establish Harry as an international fashion and music icon. In photos and stories direct from Stein, brilliant writer of hits like "Rapture" and "Heart of Glass," this book provides a fascinating snapshot of the period before and during Blondie's huge rise, by someone who was part of and who helped to shape the early punk music scene at CBGB, Andy Warhol's Factory, and early Bowery. Stars such as David Bowie, the Ramones, Joan Jett, and Iggy Pop were part of Stein's world, as were fascinating downtown characters like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Richard Hell, Stephen Sprouse, Anya Phillips, Divine, and many others. As captured by one of its greatest artists and instigators, and designed by Shepard Fairey, this book is a must-have celebration of the new-wave and punk scene, whose influence on music and fashion is just as relevant today as it was four decades ago.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I must confess, I am pretty much a lifelong fan of Blondie. I was 11 years old in '78 when I first heard Heart Of Glass on AM radio, growing up in Florida. I was brought up on country music and up to that

point, obsessed with another blonde, Dolly Parton. Until I laid eyes on the first image i'd ever seen of Debbie Harry. My world changed after I discovered Blondie. I read every magazine article I could find about them, mostly Creem Magazine stuff. Through Blondie I discovered so much more. Ramones, The Talking Heads, The Pretenders, Devo and more, Punk music that most of my peers didn't even know existed. Images of Debbie Harry have been a part of my life for the last 36 years. I've been looking forward to this books release for awhile now, but I thought I've seen most of these images before. From internet articles about the book, many of the images in this book were used in "Making Tracks, The Rise and Fall Of Blondie" By Debbie Harry, Chris Stein and Victor Bockris (Another Great Book). I was wrong. So many images new to me, and not just of Debbie, but some amazing pictures of other artist like you've never seen them before(Joan Jett, for instance). Chris Stein is a noted photographer and historian, there from the very beginning of the New York Punk Rock scene. He is of course also the guitarist and founding member of Blondie and with Debbie, chief songwriter. If you know anything about the New York Punk scene you've seen Chris Stein's pictures before. Negative is a must have for anyone who has an interest in the birth of Punk. The pictures are amazing, but the captions written by Stein are really a fun read. Remembrances of each photo, what was going on at the time and sometimes anecdotes about the subject. Kindly remembering some who are no longer with us. So yeah, I'm a fan and always will be. I'm not just a Blondie fan though. I'm a bit of a Punk historian myself and this book is something I will treasure. Thank you Mr. Stein for giving us this book, not only showcasing your photographic talents but also helping to commemorate 40 years of Blondie and 40 years of punk.

If you have any interest in the 70s punk scene you must check out this book! Not only is it full of AMAZING photos, including many of Debbie Harry, but Chris Stein's comments and memories that accompany the photos are just plain great. I have several coffee table books on punk including the history of CBGBs and The Best of Punk Magazine but this is my new favorite!!

Awesome book, it is done by an artist in the full sense of the word. Unlike other books of the same genre he gets to the essence of his surroundings and people he comes in contact. Obviously, Deborah is the main model and why not, it is her persona that gave Blondie its fame with her looks and voice. Being a famous celebrity does open doors that are not accessible to regular people and his pictures make you share his perspective about art and music. The title is perfect: the negative. That is exactly what he does in his compositions, for example; the one with Jennifer of the group the Nuns. Half the picture is a rock sculpture of some kind and it adds to the personality of the person.

He captures the everydayness of his existence, and oh mine, it is interesting! he writes the same way no need to add his philosophies just glimpses of his thoughts and Debbie's as well. Another one is Eric Emerson and girls from the band Teenage Lust backstage, page 29. It looks like a painting like Degas used to compose his ballerinas. Worth every penny, thanks, !

Blondie rocked my world in a way no other band before or after has. Rock 'n roll had become something huge. Something almost unwieldy in its giant, self-important social relevance. Disco created a hopelessly vapid environment where people could meet, dance, mate and move to the suburbs to raise their kids. Punk was something else entirely. Punk was an arrogant upstart that didn't know its place and didn't care. "Chris Stein/Negative" chronicles that moment in time when punk hurled itself into our collective consciousness. There is a distinct visual quality to punk that is almost as important as the music. The look of punk was put together at a thrift store and held together with safety pins. It was inspired by B-movies, cartoons, stuff fished out of the bargain bin and junk found at the back of grandma's closet. Punk was born out of poverty, anger and the urge to create. All performed against the background of the dirty, depressed late 70's, before urban renewal priced everybody out of the cool places. Chris Stein captures that in this book. There is a picture in this book that explains the impact of punk and Blondie. Clem and Debbie walking down a street looking wildly distinct from their surroundings and people turning to stop and stare at them. ("People stop and stare at me...". Sing it. Go ahead. You know you want to.) Stein ruminates as to whether people were staring at them because they recognized Clem and Debbie, or because Clem and Debbie looked remarkably like they'd just arrived from a hipster 2013 fashion show. It is all there in one photograph. The incredible impact of punk announcing its irreverent arrival at the end of the 1970's. The future. Chris Stein managed to capture that impact in one picture. That's why you need to buy this book.

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