

The History of Rock

Creative Lead, Redesign team

My role was to produce solutions within a redesign team tasked with reinventing the title *The History of Rock*. This redesign was to work alongside an editorial restructure that was already involved with revising content running order, so it was important that creative solutions worked in tandem with the new editorial style.

The creative direction of the pages was based around the wishes of the Editor and data from focus groups and reader surveys. Priority design requirements included clearer signposting and navigation, new infographics, and

establishing grids that suited the wish to include more picture-lead features and break up sections of copy with new boxouts and side panels.

Solution

- A faster, more accessible reader experience
- A new suite of infographics using consistent shapes, image borders, and graphic elements
- Bolder use of photography with page grids designed to accommodate full bleed images



- Using a smaller and consistent font family
- Improved pdf to print distribution strategy
- Organised and implemented pdf to printer protocols and uplinks
- A handover to their art team of a full set of working grids upon completion of the launch
- Presenting daily “Show and Tell” meetings to all involved in the redesign

Outcome

The relaunched brand saw a strong increase in both newsstand sales and subscription with sales forecasts successfully met within the proposed 6 month timescale. This brand went on to re-establish it's highest previous market share.



1977
ANNIVERSARY

“We ain’t geniuses”

The **RAMONES** make a second album, and spend a very strange evening hanging out with **PHIL SPECTOR**. Later, they ponder their reputation. “They call us assholes,” says stealth Eric Clapton fan Tommy Ramone. “I guess we really get to them.”

—MELODY MAKER JANUARY 1—

NEW YORK: THE evening begins, somewhat tenuously, with a slow ride in an unrequited elevator whose door didn't close. Ten floors later, its passengers emerged in Bedford Square, a small residential studio on West 29th Street where a buffet meal was served with champagne. Nigro was playing quietly through studio speakers, an apt choice since Lemmy Kay, who compiled these relatively obscure tracks for the album, was prominent among the hearing.

The occasion was the first public hearing of the Ramones' second album, *Ramones Live!*, which, after the initial lineup had been given an opportunity to go suitably wired on alcohol and/or potent smelling marijuana, was played very loudly to the assembled guests. There of the Ramones were present. Johnny, Dee Dee and Tommy all dressed in the obligatory jeans, leather shoes and leather jackets. Joey, the singer, is currently in hospital, where he may have to have a operation on his ankle; he is represented by his brother, Al, who on hand was John Camp, the bass player for the Ramones. Significantly, Camp is also the opposite end of the music spectrum to that of the Ramones. Significantly, Camp declined to be photographed with the three Ramones present. Ramones, of course, record for Sire in the U.S. as do the Ramones.

While sophisticated would not be quite the right word, the Ramones' second effort is a good deal less so than their first. Greater attention has been paid to the production, which makes the overall picture a lot less amateurish than before. They've discovered who and this takes away that rather flat, driving rock sound and adds immensely to the numerous guitar riffs.

Once again here's 14 tracks that make up just over 30 minutes, and consequently each song averages out at just over a couple of minutes. There are no guitar solos, no slow waltzes and just one non-original, "California Sun." The urgency of the Ramones' first record comes in which is a matter of time in their live shows.

Coupled with their new-found studio savvy comes the use of vocal harmonies, but here's a song in the form of a vocal harmony, but here's a song in the form of a vocal harmony, but here's a song in the form of a vocal harmony.

One track sounded unacceptably like the early Who, in the days when Roger Daltrey was experimenting with a more genteel, falsetto vocal style while another reminded me of the Stones, circa *Between the Buttons*, probably because the instrumentation was greater than usual.

But the majority of tracks make that music, urgent but the majority of tracks make that music, urgent but the majority of tracks make that music, urgent approach to an instant flash of song that had the first album. More are never developed, just exposed.

