

“OK! Let’s give it to ’em right now!” screamed Jack Ely of the Kingsmen into this microphone at the start of the guitar solo for “Louie Louie.” With its simple song structure, three-chord attack and forbidden teenage appeal, this single song inspired legions of kids in garages across America to pick up guitars and ROCK. “Louie Louie” has become a touchstone in the evolution of rock’n’roll, and with over 1500 recorded cover versions to date, its influence on teenage culture and the future DIY punk underground can’t be underestimated.

Ely’s vocals were so rough and unintelligible that some more puritanical listeners interpreted the lyrics as being obscene and complained. This rumor led several radio stations to ban the song and the FBI even launched an investigation. All of this only fueled the popularity of the song, which rocketed up the charts in late 1963, imprinting this grunge ur-message onto successive generations of youth, by way of the Sonics, Stooges, MC5, New York Dolls, Patti Smith, The Clash, Black Flag, and others, all of whom amplified and rebroadcast its powerful sonic meme with their own recorded versions.

#### NEUMANN U-47 MICROPHONE, CA. 1961

“There was this great record, ‘Louie Louie,’ by a band from the Pacific Northwest called The Kingsmen. I bought their album and it was a great influence on me because they were a real professional band, y’know?”

– Wayne Kramer, MC5

“‘Teen Spirit’ was such a clichéd riff. It was so close to a Boston riff or ‘Louie Louie.’ When I came up with the guitar part, Krist looked at me and said, ‘That is so ridiculous.’ I made the band play it for an hour-and-a-half.”

– Kurt Cobain, Nirvana (*Rolling Stone*, January 27, 1994)

“I was in seventh grade and ritually would watch Hugh Downs and Barbara Walters with my mother on the *Today Show*. The Who did sort of an early lip synch video of ‘I Can See For Miles’ and then they interviewed Townshend and Daltrey. They’d just returned from their first American tour – this was the peak of the British Invasion by and large. ‘Well, what was your favorite thing about America?’ They thought for a minute and said with a fairly thick accent, ‘We were in this place called Seattle and we saw this band called the Sonics.’”

– Larry Reid, curator/punk promoter/manager

“I heard that one a lot, y’know, when I was six, seven, eight years old. Of course, every kid learns that pattern and tries to figure out what he’s saying – what the hell is that guy saying? Is it satanic? Is it sexually-driven or what?”

– MIKE McCREADY, PEARL JAM

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Seattle performance art troupe Ze Whiz Kidz are one of the great hidden stories of punk rock, instilling a heavy Seattle connection to the transition between glam and punk. They were founded in 1969 by David Xavier Harrigan (aka Tomata du Plenty – pictured on this poster), who was formerly a member of the San Francisco-based psychedelic, gay drag ensemble, The Cockettes. The group featured an extensive, revolving lineup, with flamboyant names such as Satin Sheets, Gorilla Rose, Louise Lovely, Palm Springs, Cha Cha Samoa, and Rhina Stone.

Ze Whiz Kidz staged nearly a hundred gender-bending music and theater performances from 1969 to the mid-1970s, and occasionally opened for glam and glitter kings such as Alice Cooper or the New York Dolls. Tomata moved to New York in 1972 with Gorilla Rose and performed sketch theater at CBGB's and other clubs in the East Village, alongside band performances from Blondie and the Ramones. At the dawn of the punk age, Tomata du Plenty returned to Seattle and formed (along with Melba Toast and Rio de Janiero) the Tupperwares, which would soon after re-form in Los Angeles as the seminal synth-punk band the Screamers, while Whiz Kid Satin Sheets (now Satz) formed the Lewd, making a splash on the Seattle and San Francisco punk scenes.

**ALICE COOPER, ZE WHIZ KIDZ, AND THE DOILY BROTHERS, AT THE PARAMOUNT NORTHWEST,  
SEATTLE, JULY 9 – 10, 1971**

“Who else would you put on the bill with Alice Cooper, except the Whiz Kidz? Alice said at the end of the show – being as outrageous as he is – he said to us, ‘You scare me!’”

– SATZ, ZE WHIZ KIDZ, THE LEWD

“We had a lot of impromptu shows. Wednesday we’d write a show. Thursday we’d call people. We’d rehearse it. And Friday we’d put it on. And by Saturday, it would be the end of the show. We had kind of a training ground in the Submarine Room, in the basement of the Smith Tower. Originally it was a gangster club. They sold sub-machine guns and a lot of drag queens were there. It had a Class H license, which was liquor, but they got busted. So the owner was sitting down there for about two weeks with nothing to do. And so I discovered this club. At the time I was only 17, but I looked a lot older, being tall. I told him I was 21. And I told him that we had a theater group, and if he let me take it over, we would bring shows in and he wouldn’t have to be here. And he was real agreeable to that.”

– Satz, Ze Whiz Kidz, The Lewd

“DIY in the Northwest actually precedes DIY in England or New York. The earliest punk, true, classic, DIY, scrappy, cut-and-paste punk rock posters I’ve ever found are actually in the Northwest. They were done by Tomata and Gorilla Rose for the Whiz Kidz. If you look at the New York scene that developed in the ‘70s that became CBGB’s and all that stuff, their graphics more or less look like print shop graphics. It was a picture with some set type underneath it. It echoed an old show card look. It wasn’t the hand-lettered, cut out, Xeroxed, collage paste-y thing that later became associated with Jamie Reid’s work with the Sex Pistols. But that was the look of the Whiz Kids and The Screamers and the early punk scene in Seattle. The history of punk rock graphics goes way back in the Northwest.”

– Art Chantry, graphic designer

# PUNK

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NUMBER 2 MARCH



## PATTI SMITH AND TELEVISION

PLUS... AN  
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!

### BLOOD SUCKING LEECHES

New York City's *Punk* was the first magazine to devote itself totally to punk rock. By 1974, the NYC glam rock scene began to wane, and a new cadre of bands with original songs emerged. Television, Suicide, Patti Smith Group, the Ramones, the Heartbreakers, Talking Heads, Blondie and others began playing at former glam ground zero Max's Kansas City, and CBGB's.

Created by cartoonist and editor John Holmstrom, along with Ged Dunn, Jr., and Roderick Edward "Legs" McNeil, *Punk* emerged in January 1976 and made an instant impact. The goal was to cover a broad spectrum of rock and other topics, but the interest in punk music and the vitality of the New York scene dictated that *Punk* limit its scope to the local punk music community. The zine featured early work by legendary music journalist Lester Bangs, *I Shot Andy Warhol* and *American Psycho* director Mary Harron, underground cartoonist Peter Bagge, and others. Despite the rebellious name and being denied shelf space at newsstands, the magazine's circulation was up to 10,000 copies within a few months of its premiere issue and copies were being sold around the world. Until it functionally stopped publication in 1979, *Punk* was at the center of the New York punk scene.

#### **PUNK ZINE #2, MARCH 1976**

"Patti and I liked the CBGB's scene because it was small and loose. There were maybe five or six bands that hung out there – I saw the Ramones there for the first time and an early version of Blondie called the Stilettos. The owner Hilly Kristal was kind of bemused by these bands – I don't think it's what he had in mind when he named the club 'Country Bluegrass and Blues.'"

– Lenny Kaye, Patti Smith Group

"I fell in love with the Ramones at first glance. That's how I met the Stooges, I fell in love at first glance. I mean, if it takes more than five or ten seconds to figure out if you like something or not, there's something wrong with you and you shouldn't be in the taste-making end of this world. For me it's five seconds of hearing – what's left of my hearing. The Ramones had it so perfectly – they dressed alike, they had the same haircut, they had the same name, they had great songs, they had great lyrics, they were perfect. They were the perfect band."

– Danny Fields, A&R rep for the Ramones

"What really inspired me to start a band was reading about what was happening in New York. I used to read in *The Village Voice* about CBGB's and Max's Kansas City and the scene, and it sounded real exciting and open. It was all kinds of different bands playing all kinds of different music. And that's what a lot of people don't realize about punk rock. When it started it wasn't a certain style of music. It was an environment where people that made any kind of music that was outcast from the formulaic rock of the time had a venue to play. You had all kinds of bands, from the Ramones, who people associate more with punk rock nowadays, to Blondie, who was more of a pop band. The Tuff Darts were more like a bar band. And Wayne County. And Television with the long guitar jams."

– Greg Ginn, Black Flag