

**Too Fast to Live, Too Young to Die**

Punk and post-punk graphic design

Andrew Krivine

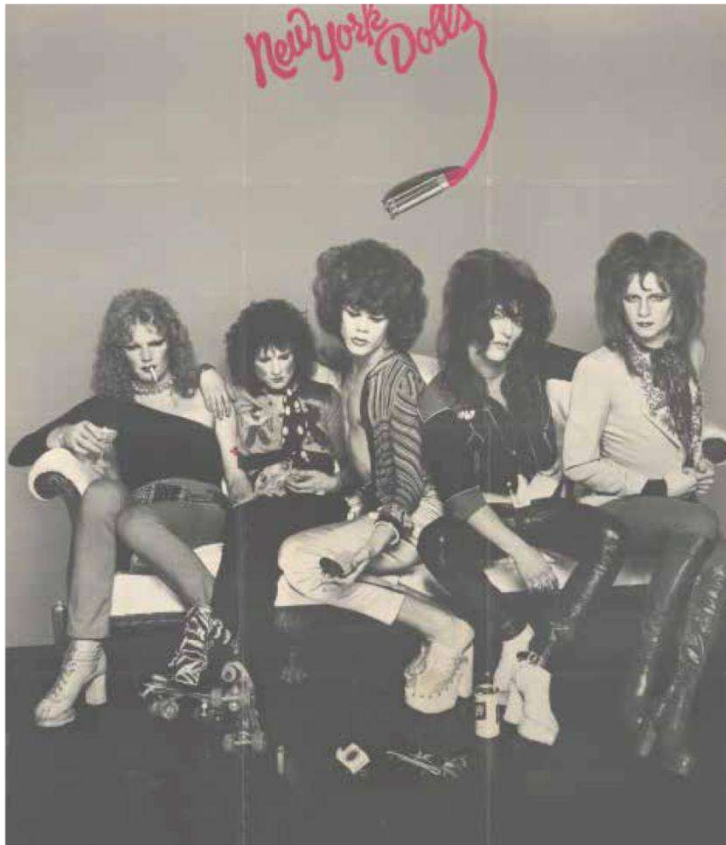
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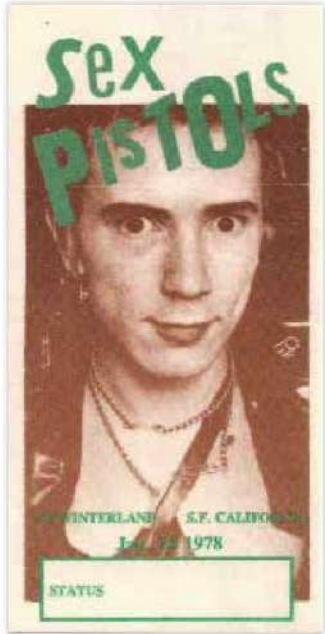
**PAVILION**



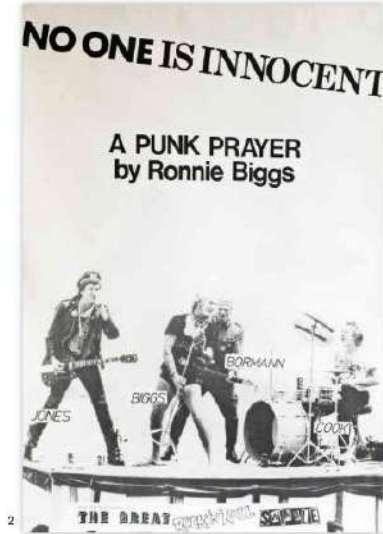
**NEW YORK DOLLS:** (above) *New York Dolls* LP poster for debut album, Mercury Records (July 1973), **Toshi** photography; (right) cassette insert for *Lipstick Killers* (ROIR, 1981), **Bob Gruen** photography, **Scott Kempner** typography



**NEW YORK DOLLS:** (above) flyer for first appearance in San Francisco, CA (1973) **Matrix** design; (left) promotional stickers, Mercury Records (1973)



**SEX PISTOLS:** 1 backstage pass to the Pistols' final performance, at Winterland, San Francisco, CA (14 January 1978); 2 poster for single recorded with Ronnie Biggs, 'No One Is Innocent', Virgin Records (1978), **Jamie Reid** design; 3 locally made poster for the Pistols' performance at the Longhorn Ballroom in Dallas, TX (10 January 1978)

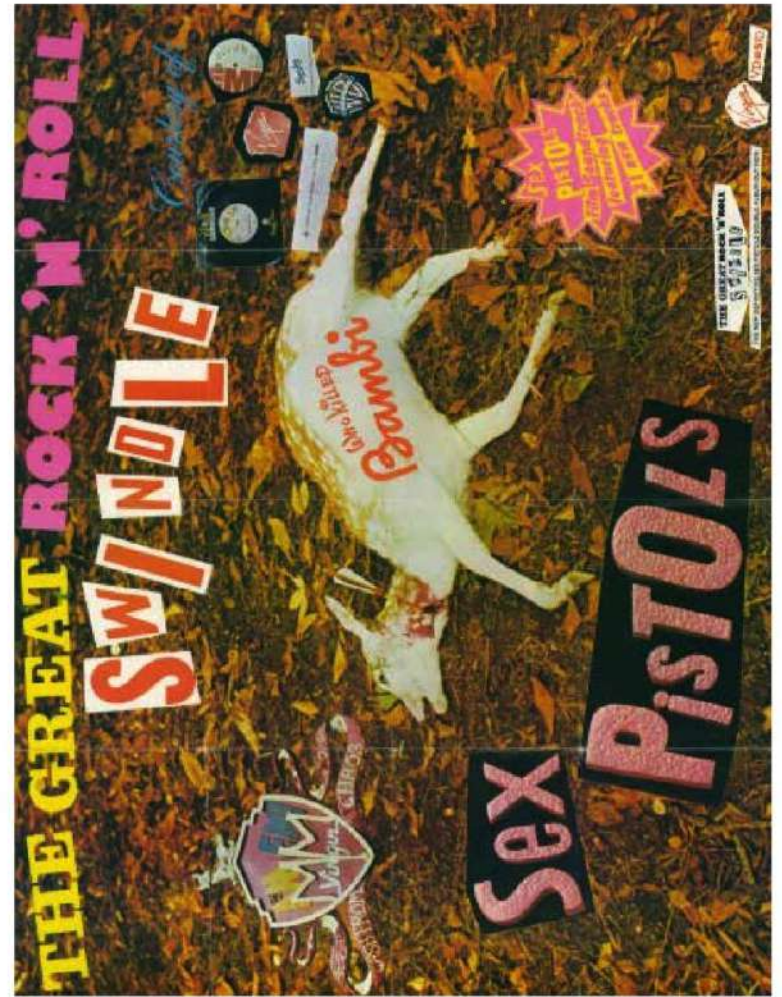


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**SEX PISTOLS:** *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle* LP poster, Virgin Records (1979), **Jamie Reid** design; the poster was promptly withdrawn by Virgin Records in response to threats from The Walt Disney Company



As the 1970s ended it seemed revolutionary that graphic designers such as Cole, Peter Saville and Malcolm Garrett were as well-known by the record-buying public as the members of bands whose music their work adorned.

It's no accident that matters of graphic design became part of the music press discourse at a time when changes in printing technology were allowing the inclusion of colour pages in what had previously been a strictly black-and-white 'inky' affair. The design of sleeves and advertisements were discussed by journalists in the UK who had been to art schools and universities and who sprinkled articles with references to Futurists, Russian constructivism, German expressionism and Dada. In the 1980s the rise of magazines like *The Face* and *i.D.* not only showcased graphic design but were themselves graphic design statements, and while the bands that they featured were not always cover stars, it was their attitude to commercial design as much as their sound which made them essential content.

There are also works here representing post-punk in America which, while it wasn't as predominant as it was in the UK – perhaps because the hardcore scene persisted in the States for so long and new wave, being more radio friendly, became a much bigger movement than punk ever was there – it nevertheless gave the world Pere Ubu and REM, among others. The inclusion of Blondie in this section is because while they came from the original New York pre-1977 punk scene, their huge worldwide success made millions of people aware that there was such a 'thing' as punk two years after the movement had first flared into being. Yes, they were pop stars too.

By 1986, the idea of sub-genres of music was becoming obsolete as the ever-growing corporate music machine swallowed up the once-thriving indie pioneers of punk, and MTV regurgitated 1950s-style rock 'n' roll revolution via self-consciously 'edgy' videos. The Smiths, arguably the last great independently released post-punk band, broke up in 1987, and before long their record label Rough Trade was no more.

Geologically, aftershocks can be more seismically powerful than the initial earthquake. As readers look at the images across the following pages, perhaps they might agree that a strong case can be made that post-punk produced such an after-effect, in both sonic and graphic design terms.



BLONDIE: *Plastic Letters* LP poster, Chrysalis Records (1978)

# TOO FAST TO LIVE TOO YOUNG TO DIE

## Marketing & Publicity

The world's largest unique collection of punk and post-punk memorabilia

- **An exhibition of the collection** is currently on show at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, moving to Brussels later this year, with further worldwide dates in the pipeline for 2020/2021
- **National press** – image extract feature with the *Guardian* or another national newspaper
- **Art and design media** – review coverage and features
- **Music media** – review coverage, features and advertising
- **Guerrilla punk marketing campaign** with stickers, flyers and badges available
- **Targeted social media advertising** to punk and post-punk fans and memorabilia collectors

**“I really have no idea what they view as ‘punk art,’ and so why not? Let’s have a go at it.”** John Rotten Lydon in *Rolling Stone*

