

NEW YORK DOLLS: PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB GRUEN

Photographs by Bob Gruen – Abrams Image / Harry N. Abrams / La Martiniere Groupe

While the New York Dolls may not be a household name in the same way that the Sex Pistols or The Clash are, the band's legacy resides in the top tier of punk and glam rock history. And while the music is key, that significant history is quite attached to a visual component that the Dolls helped birth. In *New York Dolls*, photographer Bob Gruen, whose images have been almost everywhere for the last several decades, offers up 200 photos from the most active points of the Dolls' career, in tandem with quotes from the band and other heavy-hitters, such as Legs McNeil, Iggy Pop, and Lester Bangs. The imagery in the book is striking; visuals solidify the impact of the Dolls' wild, pioneering aesthetic with photos of mid-seventies studio sittings. But the up-close documentary aspect also crawls backstage and onto the streets with the band. Sure, the live imagery is compelling, however what's most interesting is seeing how much (or how little) the band stripped down their performance persona when the spotlights were off. Beautifully compiled, the book strikes the right balance between text and image. Careful, though: it might make you feel old. (Meredith Turits)

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